

**APRIL 1936**

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# **THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL**

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**STALIN-HOWARD INTERVIEW**

**ERNST THAELMANN**

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FRONT IN SPAIN**

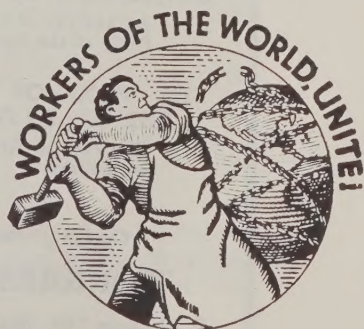
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THE COMMUNIST  
INTERNATIONAL



## Stalin-Howard Interview

*(Interview Given by Joseph Stalin to Roy Howard, Representative of the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Chain, on March 1, 1936)*

**HOWARD:** What in your opinion would be the consequences of the recent events in Japan for the situation in the Far East?

**STALIN:** So far it is difficult to say. Too little material is available to do so. The picture is not sufficiently clear.

**HOWARD:** What will be the Soviet attitude should Japan launch the long predicted military drive against Outer Mongolia?

**STALIN:** If Japan should venture to attack the Mongolian People's Republic and encroach upon its independence, we will have to help the Mongolian People's Republic. Stamoniyakov, Litvinov's assistant, recently informed the Japanese ambassador in Moscow of this and pointed to the immutable friendly relations which the U.S.S.R. has been maintaining with the Mongolian People's Republic since 1921. We will help the Mongolian People's Republic just as we helped it in 1921.

**HOWARD:** Would a Japanese attempt to seize Ulan Bator make positive action by the U.S.S.R. a necessity?

**STALIN:** Yes.

**HOWARD:** Have recent events developed any new Japanese activities in this region which are construed by the Soviets as of an aggressive nature?

**STALIN:** The Japanese, I think, are continuing to concentrate troops on the frontiers of the Mongolian People's Republic, but no new attempts at frontier conflicts are so far observed.

**HOWARD:** The Soviet Union appears to believe that Germany and Poland have aggressive designs against the Soviet Union and are planning military cooperation. Poland, however, protested her unwillingness to permit any foreign troops using her territory as a base for operations against a third nation. How does the Soviet Union envisage such aggression by Germany? From what position, in what direction would the German forces operate?

**STALIN:** History shows that when any state intends to make war against another state, even not adjacent, it begins to seek for frontiers across which it can reach the frontiers of the state it wants to attack. Usually the aggressive state finds such frontiers. It either finds them with the aid of force, as was the case in 1914 when Germany invaded Belgium in order to strike at France, or it "borrows" such a frontier, as Germany, for example, did from Latvia in 1918, in her drive to Leningrad. I do not know precisely what frontiers Germany may adapt to her aims, but I think she will find people willing to "lend" her a frontier.

**HOWARD:** Seemingly, the entire world today is predicting another great war. If war proves inevitable, when, Mr. Stalin, do you think it will come?



STALIN: It is impossible to predict that. War may break out unexpectedly. Wars are not declared, nowadays. They simply start. On the other hand, however, I think the positions of the friends of peace are becoming stronger. The friends of peace can work openly. They rely on the power of public opinion. They have at their command instruments like the League of Nations, for example. This is where the friends of peace have the advantage. Their strength lies in the fact that their activities against war are backed by the will of the broad masses of the people. There is not a people in the world that wants war. As for the enemies of peace, they are compelled to work secretly. That is where the enemies of peace are at a disadvantage. Incidentally, it is not precluded that precisely because of this they may decide upon a military adventure as an act of desperation.

One of the latest successes the friends of peace have achieved is the ratification of the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance by the French Chamber of Deputies. To a certain extent this pact is an obstacle to the enemies of peace.

HOWARD: Should war come, Mr. Stalin, where is it most likely to break out? Where are the war clouds the most menacing, in the East or in the West?

STALIN: In my opinion there are two seats of war danger. The first is in the Far East, in the zone of Japan. I have in mind the numerous statements made by Japanese military men containing threats against other powers. The second seat is in the zone of Germany. It is hard to say which is the most menacing, but both exist and are active. Compared with these two principal seats of the danger the Italo-Ethiopian war is an episode. At present the Far Eastern seat of danger reveals the greatest activity. However, the center of this danger may shift to Europe. This is indicated, for example, by the interview which Herr Hitler recently gave to a French newspaper. In this interview Hitler seems to have tried to say peaceful things, but he sprinkled his "peacefulness" so plentifully with threats against both France and the Soviet Union that nothing remained of his "peacefulness." You see, even when Herr Hitler wants to speak of peace he cannot avoid uttering threats. This is symptomatic.

HOWARD: What situation or condition, in your opinion, furnishes the chief war menace today?

STALIN: Capitalism.

HOWARD: In which specific manifestation of capitalism?

STALIN: Its imperialist, usurpatory manifestation.

You remember how the first World War arose. It arose out of the desire to redivide the world. Today we have the same background. There are capitalist states which consider that they were cheated in the previous redistribution of spheres of influence, territories, sources of raw materials, markets, etc., and which would want another redivision, that would be in their favor. Capitalism in its imperialist phase is a system which considers war to be a legitimate instrument for settling international disputes, a legal method in fact, if not in law.

HOWARD: May there not be an element of danger in the genuine fear existent in what you term capitalistic countries of an intent on the

part of the Soviet Union to force its political theories on other nations?

STALIN: There is no justification whatever for such fears. If you think that Soviet people want to change the face of surrounding states, and by forcible means at that, you are entirely mistaken. Of course, Soviet people would like to see the face of surrounding states changed, but that is the business of the surrounding states. I fail to see what danger the surrounding states can perceive in the ideas of Soviet people if these states are really sitting firmly in the saddle.

HOWARD: Does this, your statement, mean that the Soviet Union has to any degree abandoned its plans and intentions for bringing about a world revolution?

STALIN: We never had such plans and intentions.

HOWARD: You appreciate, no doubt, Mr. Stalin, that much of the world has long entertained a different impression.

STALIN: This is the product of a misunderstanding.

HOWARD: A tragic misunderstanding?

STALIN: No, a comical one. Or, perhaps, tragi-comic.

You see, we Marxists believe that a revolution will also take place in other countries. But it will take place only when the revolutionaries in those countries think it possible, or necessary. The export of revolution is nonsense. Every country will make its own revolution if it wants to, and if it does not want to there will be no revolution. For example, our country wanted to make a revolution and made it, and now we are building a new, classless society. But to assert that we want to make a revolution in other countries, to interfere in their lives, means saying what is untrue, and what we have never advocated.

HOWARD: At the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., President Roosevelt and Litvinov exchanged identical notes concerning the question of propaganda. Paragraph four of Litvinov's letter to President Roosevelt said that the Soviet government undertakes "not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organization or group—and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organization or group, or of representatives or officials of any organization or group—which has as its aim the overthrow or preparation for the overthrow of, or the bringing about by force of a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of its territories or possessions." Why, Mr. Stalin, did Litvinov sign this letter if compliance with the terms of paragraph four is incompatible with the interests of the Soviet Union or beyond its control?

STALIN: The fulfilment of the obligations contained in the paragraph you have quoted is within our control; we have fulfilled, and will continue to fulfil, these obligations.

According to our constitution political emigrants have the right to reside on our territory. We provide them with the right of asylum just as the United States gives right of asylum to political emigrants. It is quite obvious that when Litvinov signed that letter he assumed that the obligations contained in it were mutual. Do you think, Mr. Howard, that the fact that there are on the territory of the U.S.A. Russian white-guard emigrants who are carrying on propaganda against the Soviets and in favor of capitalism, who enjoy the material support of American



citizens and who in some cases represent groups of terrorists, is contrary to the terms of the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement? Evidently these emigrants enjoy the right of asylum, which also exists in the United States. As far as we are concerned, we would never tolerate on our territory a single terrorist, no matter against whom his criminal designs were directed. Evidently the right of asylum is given a wider interpretation in the U.S.A. than in our country. But we are not complaining.

Perhaps you will say that we sympathize with the political emigrants who come onto our territory. But are there no American citizens who sympathize with whiteguard emigrants who carry on propaganda in favor of capitalism and against the Soviets? So what is the point? The point is not to assist these people, not to finance their activities. The point is that official persons in either country must refrain from interfering in the internal life of the other country. Our officials are honestly fulfilling this obligation. If any of them has failed in his duty let us be informed about it.

If we were to go too far and to demand that all the whiteguard emigrants be deported from the United States, that would be encroaching on the right of asylum proclaimed both in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R. A reasonable limit to claims and counter-claims must be recognized. Litvinov signed his letter to President Roosevelt, not in a private capacity, but in the capacity of a representative of a state, just as President Roosevelt did. Their agreement is an agreement between two states. In signing that agreement both Litvinov and President Roosevelt, as representatives of two states, had in mind the activities of the agents of their states who must not and will not interfere in the internal affairs of the other side. The right of asylum proclaimed in both countries could not be affected by this agreement. The Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement, as an agreement between the representatives of two states, should be interpreted within these limits.

HOWARD: Did not Browder and Darcy, the American Communists, appearing before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International last summer, appeal for the overthrow by force of the American government?

STALIN: I confess I do not remember the speeches of Comrades Browder and Darcy; I do not even remember what they spoke about. Perhaps they did say something of the kind. But it was not Soviet people who formed the American Communist Party. It was formed by Americans. It exists in the U.S.A. legally. It puts up its candidates at elections, including presidential elections. If Comrades Browder and Darcy made speeches in Moscow once, they made hundreds of similar, and certainly stronger, speeches at home, in the U.S.A. The American Communists are permitted to advocate their ideas freely, are they not? It would be quite wrong to hold the Soviet government responsible for the activities of American Communists.

HOWARD: But in this instance, is it not a fact that their activities took place on Soviet soil contrary to the terms of paragraph four of the agreement between Roosevelt and Litvinov?

STALIN: What are the activities of the Communist Party; in what way can they manifest themselves? Usually their activities consist in



peasants, tenants, agricultural laborers and the proletarian and petty-bourgeois masses who joined the people's front so as to bring about a radical transformation of Spain, a country of feudal land relations, clerical obscurantism and fascism, are awaiting the immediate direct satisfaction of their needs.

But even the toilers who today are still supporters of the clerical and fascist charlatans will, as a result of the tremendous changes in the moods of the masses, as a result of the sudden shifting of forces, be ready to change their line in favor of the people's front, if the latter actually does give them the thing with the aid of which fascism only tempted them, namely, a real, rapid, tangible improvement in their conditions. We must stretch out a hand of brotherly assistance to these toilers so as to draw them out of the slough of want. We must help them, help them economically and politically, in order to wrench them from the strong grip of clerical and fascist demagoguery, so as to inspire them with the knowledge of their own strength and the strength of the toiling masses united in the people's front movement.

The whole problem today is to ensure that the great movement of the people does not for a single day weaken its efforts. And if this movement tears out fascism by the very roots, and alters the living conditions of the Spanish toilers, with the same determination with which it drove out the hornets' nest of fascism, it will bring along in its train all those whom fascism has successfully fooled up to now, and convert the electoral victory into the final victory of the Spanish people over the counter-revolution.

The Spanish revolutionists correctly believe that the next few weeks will decide the situation. During these weeks, the proletarian organizations are called upon to perform miracles of political and organizational action, just as the workers displayed miracles of heroism during the October battles. During these weeks, the political conditions will be so much hot iron, and we must strike while the iron is hot. It must not be allowed to cool before hammering it into the right shape. The main thing that has to be achieved in Spain during the next few weeks is to bring about an immediate, tangible improvement in the living conditions of the toilers and first and foremost in the living conditions of the needy peasant masses. A blow must be dealt at the roots of fascism; the proletarian parties must consolidate the victory of the people's front politically and organizationally. The Communist Party will do everything possible to convince the Socialists and the workers organized in the syndicalist trade unions of the decisive importance of these weeks, and, together with them, urge the people's front to take rapid, bold and consistent action.

Fascism is beaten, but still constitutes a serious political force and a menacing danger. At the present moment it has retreated, but only to take up new positions, to mobilize all its reserves and to make a new, fascist, counter-revolutionary coup d'état.

The Spanish revolutionaries know that fascism still constitutes a serious political force. Wherein lies the source of this strength?

1. The coalition policy of the Socialist Party begun in April, 1931, and continued for two and a half years, did not, and could not, lead to

ist society denies personal liberty. That is not true. Of course, in order to build something new one must economize, accumulate resources, reduce one's consumption for a time and borrow from others. If one wants to build a house one saves up money, cuts down consumption for a time; otherwise the house would never be built. How much more true is this when it is a matter of building a new human society! We had to cut down consumption somewhat for a time, collect the necessary resources and exert great effort. This is exactly what we did and we built a socialist society.

But we did not build this society in order to restrict personal liberty but in order that the human individual may feel really free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without quotation marks. It is difficult for me to imagine what "personal liberty" is enjoyed by an unemployed person, who goes about hungry, and cannot find employment. Real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home and of bread. Only in such a society is real, and not paper, personal and every other liberty possible.

HOWARD: Do you view as compatible the coincidental development of American democracy and the Soviet system?

STALIN: American democracy and the Soviet system may peacefully exist side by side and compete with each other. But one cannot evolve into the other. The Soviet system will not evolve into American democracy, or *vice versa*. We can peacefully exist side by side if we do not find fault with each other over every trifling matter.

HOWARD: A new constitution is being elaborated in the U.S.S.R. providing for a new system of elections. To what degree can this new system alter the situation in the U.S.S.R. since, as formerly, only one party will come forward at elections?

STALIN: We shall probably adopt our new constitution at the end of this year. The commission appointed to draw up the constitution is working and should finish its labors soon. As has been announced already, according to the new constitution, the suffrage will be universal, equal, direct and secret. You are puzzled by the fact that only one party will come forward at elections. You cannot see how election contests can take place under these conditions. Evidently, candidates will be put forward not only by the Communist Party, but by all sorts of public, non-Party organizations. And we have hundreds of these. We have no contending parties any more than we have a capitalist class contending against a working class which is exploited by the capitalists. Our society consists exclusively of free toilers of town and country—workers, peasants, intellectuals. Each of these strata may have its special interests and express them by means of the numerous public organizations that exist. But since there are no classes, since the dividing lines between classes have been obliterated, since only a slight, but not a fundamental, difference between various strata in socialist society has remained, there can be no soil for the creation of contending parties. Where there are not several classes there cannot be several parties, for a party is part of a class.

Under National-“Socialism” there is also only one party. But nothing will come of this fascist one-party system. The point is that in Germany, capitalism and classes have remained, the class struggle has remained and will force itself to the surface in spite of everything, even in the struggle between parties which represent antagonistic classes, just as it did in Spain, for example. In Italy there is also only party, the Fascist Party. But nothing will come of it there for the same reasons.

Why will our suffrage be universal? Because all citizens, except those deprived of the franchise by the courts, will have the right to elect and be elected.

Why will our suffrage be equal? Because neither differences in property (which still exist to some extent) nor racial or national affiliation will entail either privilege or disability. Women will enjoy the same rights to elect and be elected as men. Our suffrage will be really equal.

Why secret? Because we want to give Soviet people complete freedom to vote for those they want to elect, for those whom they trust to safeguard their interests.

Why direct? Because direct elections to all representative institutions, right up to the supreme bodies, will best of all safeguard the interests of the toilers of our boundless country.

You think that there will be no election contests. But there will be, and I foresee very lively election campaigns. There are not a few institutions in our country which work badly. Cases occur when this or that local government body fails to satisfy certain of the multifarious and growing requirements of the toilers of town and country. Have you built a good school or not? Have you improved housing conditions? Are you a bureaucrat? Have you helped to make our labor more effective and our lives more cultured? Such will be the criteria with which millions of electors will measure the fitness of candidates, reject the unsuitable, expunge their names from candidates' lists, and promote and nominate the best. Yes, election campaigns will be lively, they will be conducted around numerous, very acute problems, principally of a practical nature, of first class importance for the people. Our new electoral system will tighten up all institutions and organizations and compel them to improve their work. Universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage in the U.S.S.R. will be a whip in the hands of the population against the organs of government which work badly. In my opinion our new Soviet constitution will be the most democratic constitution in the world.

*(Recorded by K. UMANSKY)*



## The Instigator of War in Europe

THREE years ago Hitler fascism began its rule with the burning of the German Reichstag, and today it stands at the hand of the German army as the instigator of war in Europe.

The provocative violation of the Locarno Treaty and the march of the German troops into the demilitarized zone on the French frontier have glaringly revealed to the whole world that the methods of ruling banditry which the Hitlerites have till now unrestrainedly made use of in the sphere of home policy, *i.e.*, to suppress the German working class, are now being cynically and insolently transplanted by them onto the arena of international relations.

Of late this Hitlerite jump onto the road of foreign political adventures was to have been expected. It is linked up with the fact that in its home policy the Hitler regime is coming up against *ever increasing difficulties*. Three years have been long enough for them to bring things to such a pass in Germany that now there is no violence strong enough to enable the colossal sums of money to be squeezed out of the already fleeced toiling people which the fascist regime requires to cover its expenditure. A food shortage has already set in. Unemployment is once more on the increase. The indignation of the broad masses is sharpening. The fascist government felt that the German soil would soon begin to burn under its feet.

This circumstance helped to speed up the bold sallies of the Hitler government in the sphere of foreign politics. But this is not the only factor operating in this direction. Japan by its rapacious acts in China, and Italy by its war in Ethiopia, have made the *international situation* unstable. And it is in these murky waters that German fascism now hopes to fish. It sought for *allies*, and found them in Japanese imperialism and Polish fascism. Mussolini, apparently, promised the Hitler government to adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality in the event of the violation of the Locarno Treaty. Moreover, we may take it for granted that Hitler was informed in advance of the plans for a state coup d'etat by the fascist military clique in Japan, and wanted to coordinate his action in the Rhineland with the events in Japan.

But most of all Hitler was spurred on in his adventurist plans by the fact that the League of Nations reacted so miserably to the military aggression of Japan and Italy, and that these examples encouraged the Hitler government with the idea that it could, almost with impunity, undertake similar action. These hopes of impunity were still further increased as a result of the action of the fascists in France, Czechoslovakia and other countries against the conclusion of pacts of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R. Moreover, the British government in this connection showed its hand in a way which especially heartened Hitler, when it concluded the naval agreement with Germany and thus legalized the latter's previous violation of agreements (the introduction of universal conscription).

After all this there is really nothing surprising in the fact that Hitler in his great limitedness thought that he could do anything! And all that he has now actually taken the liberty of doing has caused

*a tremendous sharpening of the international situation and of the war danger in the heart of Europe.* It has created a direct menace to France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and, of course, particularly signifies the danger of an attack against the Soviet Union. But at the same time it signifies a tremendous danger for the German people who, no less than other peoples, are interested in maintaining peace. For Hitler is leading Germany headlong to a new military defeat, still more serious than the one which Wilhelm II suffered.

The further development of the international situation in one direction or another now depends to a high degree upon the behavior of England. It is clear to the whole world that *joint action on the part of England, France and the Soviet Union against the aggressive policy of Hitler could ensure peace.* It is equally clear to the whole world that the U.S.S.R. as hitherto will consistently struggle to maintain peace. France is also interested in actively defending peace. This must be our starting point if we wish to understand to what degree the maintenance of peace depends today upon the behavior of England. But we do not know yet what England will do now. We only know that any kind of support for Hitler's policy and any kind of double-dealing on the part of the British government is capable of encouraging and spurring on the violators of peace to be found in Berlin.

Public opinion in England made its desire for peace and its vigilance felt on the question of the Italo-Ethiopian war. This public opinion demanded the adoption of sanctions against the aggressor, and forced the British government to give up its plans for the division of Ethiopia. But can we assume that public opinion in England will react with the same vigilance and determination to Hitler's aggression today? It is not possible to say this. In any case, we see that in England the dark forces are at work doing their utmost to lull the vigilance of the masses of the people.

How much greater is the menace of a new world war today, in consequence of the steps taken by Hitler, than in consequence of the Italian attack against Ethiopia! Nevertheless, a section of the English press goes so far as to give an "optimistic estimate" of the situation for the express purpose of misleading public opinion. And some of the labor newspapers (*The People* and *Reynold's Illustrated News*) even hastened to advertise the obviously demagogic proposals made by Hitler as "arousing great hopes". This is absolutely unheard of! Is it conceivable that the editors of these papers have failed to see how clumsy was the trap set by Hitler in his proposal of "peace conditions"? It is inconceivable. Why, the majority of the world press immediately saw through the fact that his proposal to the countries neighboring on Germany to conclude pacts of non-aggression for 25 years is nothing but a *flimsy covering for his brazen war policy.* He needs some "pacifist" demagoguery when he is trying to collect all the arch-reactionary forces in the world against the policy of collective security, against the peace policy of the U.S.S.R., and in support of his robber plans. Any labor newspaper ought to have understood that immediately. But there are "labor" newspapers in England which advance Hitler as the apostle of peace, instead of telling the workers the truth, namely: *there he is, the chief enemy of peace.*

We must say that people who justify the foreign policy of fascism by these means thereby at bottom also support the German fascist regime inside Germany. For there is no Chinese wall between the home and foreign policies of governments.

This example shows how important it is for England, and naturally not for England alone, to enlighten the widest masses of the people as to the real meaning of Hitler's demagoguery. This is the first, most elementary task of all sincere friends of peace.

The chief task today is to *collect all available forces for the struggle for peace.*

*The united action of the working class* has been tried out in the arena of home politics and found to be the mightiest weapon in the struggle against the offensive of fascism. France and Spain are splendid examples of this. Through the united action of the working class, fascism in these countries has been driven into a corner. On the international arena, united working class action would be a no less effective weapon in the struggle against fascist aggression. But precisely because it has not been possible to create *an international united front of the working class movement*, fascism has dared to take the offensive on the foreign political arena. The enemies of the people are making use of the split in the working class movement.

The united front proposals made on the eve, and at the beginning of the Italo-Ethiopian war, by Comrade Dimitroff, General Secretary of the Communist International, were *rejected* by the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International together with the leadership of the International Federation of Trade Unions. Is it not clear that this refusal by both international working class organizations to fulfil their duty could only increase the insolence of the fascist instigators of war?

Just imagine, comrades and workers of all countries, how different the international situation would have been today had the Labor and Socialist International agreed to united action with the Communist International, had the Labor Party in England, the Social-Democratic Parties of the Scandinavian countries, of Czechoslovakia, of Holland, etc., and the big trade union organizations of these countries formed an *international anti-fascist united front* with the Communist and Socialist Parties and the trade unions of France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Germany, Poland, etc.! *It would have been a powerful barrier against fascism and war.* Not a single government could have ignored it. The League of Nations would have had to act differently. Italian fascism would have been at a deadlock. The Japanese military clique would immediately have become more cautious in their robber plans. And even the dunderheaded Hitlerites would have thought twice about the consequences of their adventurous acts. In a word, the position today would have been different.

This shows how heavy is the responsibility which lies upon the leadership of the Labor and Socialist International.

Last year the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International like the majority of the Social-Democratic Parties, restricted itself to demanding *sanctions from the League of Nations* against the aggression of Italian fascism. What are they now demanding against



the aggression of German fascism? What do they intend to do? The workers in all countries are awaiting a reply to these questions. Now more than ever before we must demand really determined measures from the League of Nations to put a check upon the militant aggressiveness of German fascism, to support the consistent peace policy of the U.S.S.R., to guarantee universal peace.

But the most important, most urgent task is the immediate organization of militant *mass action* by the toiling classes in all capitalist countries against the menacing war danger. The masses must be brought into this movement in their millions!

In France and Spain the mighty movement of the people's front has achieved great successes of late. These successes raise hopes among the friends of peace in all countries that the parties of the French and Spanish people's front will now march at the head of the international movement against the acute war danger brought about by Hitler fascism.

The working class in other countries, first and foremost in England, Poland and Czechoslovakia, will demand of their biggest political and trade union organizations that they take an active part in this movement. And in each individual country it is the task of the leaders of the movement for peace successfully to find the correct, concrete, most urgent demands to be presented today to the rulers of their countries and the fulfilment of which should be demanded and guaranteed by the movement for peace.

There are also grounds for anticipating that the women and the youth of the toiling classes everywhere will take part with tremendous energy in rallying together with this militant movement for peace, and will display miracles of enthusiasm and determination in this work.

Comrade Stalin, the great leader of the world proletariat, was right when he said a few days ago, that: "*The positions of the friends of peace are becoming stronger.*"

"*The friends of peace,*" he said, "*can work openly. . . . Their strength lies in the fact that their activities against war are backed by the will of the broad masses of the people. . . .*"

"*There is not a people in the world that wants war.*"

Yes, there is no people in the world desiring war. But there are fascists. There are Hitlerites. There are warmongers. And there is also the fact of the split in the forces of the masses of the people. It is on the fact of this split that the fascist instigators of war are building up their hopes.

So that the point now is to hammer out the people's front without delay, to rally the masses in their millions so that the peoples of the earth will prevent the Hitlerites from carrying out their criminal war plans.

The governments of the capitalist countries must be confronted by such a mighty movement of the people that they will be unable either directly or indirectly to support the war plans of Hitler or to play with the firebrand of war. Such a powerful movement of the people will constitute the decisive force to drive back all aggressors.

The chief slogan in this great struggle is:

*Down with Hitler—the instigator of war in Europe!*

*Unite all forces for the maintenance of peace!*

## The Victory of the People's Front in Spain

**I**N October, 1934, the Spanish workers took up arms to defend their rights and liberties against fascism. They fought on the barricades to save the Spanish people from the fate which had befallen the peoples of Germany and Italy. They fought with amazing courage, but they lost the battle. It was a defeat, however, which contained the elements of future victory. Spanish fascism tried to erect its terrorist rule on graves and prisons. But the victors did not feel they were out of danger, for their victory bore within itself the preconditions of defeat. The Asturians who fought for their liberty inflicted deep wounds upon the victors. The unextinguishable fire of the people's revolution burned in Spain. The Spanish proletariat lost the battle, but acquired new forces and won still more confidence and new sympathy among the broad masses of the people. Built up on the basis of joint action by the Communist and Socialist Parties, on the basis of united action by the decisive masses of the proletariat, the anti-fascist people's movement swelled into a mighty, rushing torrent, which boiled and stormed, and hurtled forward ever more openly and unrestrainedly, and ever more loudly drowned the voice of the victors in its mighty roar.

This torrent of the anti-fascist people's movement overthrew all barriers and obstacles in its path, and swept away the government of fascists and reactionaries. The electoral victory of the Spanish people's front, which has won an absolute majority in the Cortes, exceeded all the fears of the counter-revolution. Under the pressure of the mighty, invincible people's movement in Spain, which has brought freedom to those held in prison, opened for the workers the doors of their people's clubs and reinstated the members of the municipal councils who had been dismissed from their posts, fascism was forced at the first moment to give up the action it had prepared against the majority of the people, and many fascists fled abroad. The government resigned and a new government was formed. A few days later it declared an amnesty for all anti-fascist prisoners.

The speed with which all these events took place is an indication of the great scope of the people's movement, but the speed must be maintained by the movement if the victory is to be consolidated. The success is a tremendous one! It is a revolutionary event. But the dimensions of the success confront the people's front and the proletarian organizations, and first and foremost, the Communist Party of Spain, with still greater tasks, and place a colossal, historic responsibility on them.

The toiling people of Spain are expecting the victorious people's front to bring them rapid, radical and perfectly tangible changes in all the unbearable conditions against which they have hitherto revolted repeatedly, though unsuccessfully. The Catalonians, the Basques and Galicians are expecting the immediate fulfilment of their national freedom and the right to self-determination. The masses of the

peasants, tenants, agricultural laborers and the proletarian and petty-bourgeois masses who joined the people's front so as to bring about a radical transformation of Spain, a country of feudal land relations, clerical obscurantism and fascism, are awaiting the immediate direct satisfaction of their needs.

But even the toilers who today are still supporters of the clerical and fascist charlatans will, as a result of the tremendous changes in the moods of the masses, as a result of the sudden shifting of forces, be ready to change their line in favor of the people's front, if the latter actually does give them the thing with the aid of which fascism only tempted them, namely, a real, rapid, tangible improvement in their conditions. We must stretch out a hand of brotherly assistance to these toilers so as to draw them out of the slough of want. We must help them, help them economically and politically, in order to wrench them from the strong grip of clerical and fascist demagoguery, so as to inspire them with the knowledge of their own strength and the strength of the toiling masses united in the people's front movement.

The whole problem today is to ensure that the great movement of the people does not for a single day weaken its efforts. And if this movement tears out fascism by the very roots, and alters the living conditions of the Spanish toilers, with the same determination with which it drove out the hornets' nest of fascism, it will bring along in its train all those whom fascism has successfully fooled up to now, and convert the electoral victory into the final victory of the Spanish people over the counter-revolution.

The Spanish revolutionists correctly believe that the next few weeks will decide the situation. During these weeks, the proletarian organizations are called upon to perform miracles of political and organizational action, just as the workers displayed miracles of heroism during the October battles. During these weeks, the political conditions will be so much hot iron, and we must strike while the iron is hot. It must not be allowed to cool before hammering it into the right shape. The main thing that has to be achieved in Spain during the next few weeks is to bring about an immediate, tangible improvement in the living conditions of the toilers and first and foremost in the living conditions of the needy peasant masses. A blow must be dealt at the roots of fascism; the proletarian parties must consolidate the victory of the people's front politically and organizationally. The Communist Party will do everything possible to convince the Socialists and the workers organized in the syndicalist trade unions of the decisive importance of these weeks, and, together with them, urge the people's front to take rapid, bold and consistent action.

Fascism is beaten, but still constitutes a serious political force and a menacing danger. At the present moment it has retreated, but only to take up new positions, to mobilize all its reserves and to make a new, fascist, counter-revolutionary coup d'etat.

The Spanish revolutionaries know that fascism still constitutes a serious political force. Wherein lies the source of this strength?

1. The coalition policy of the Socialist Party begun in April, 1931, and continued for two and a half years, did not, and could not, lead to



the satisfaction of the chief demands of the toilers, and, primarily, of the peasants. It scarcely touched upon the material base which ensures the domination of the landlords, the churches, and the finance capitalist magnates, leaving them their privileges and monopolies. Thus, it caused dissatisfaction and disillusionment among the masses of the people, and allowed the reactionary fascist demagogues to make use of this dissatisfaction and to increase their influence over the masses.

2. The fascists were able to base themselves upon the Catholic co-operatives, the agricultural syndicates, and the agricultural credit societies, to convert them into a tool for directly influencing the peasants, and thus subordinating over two million peasants in need of credits to their influence.

3. The fascists, relying on the colossal economic and political influence of the Church, obtained the organizational force and the tremendous material means they required, precisely through the churches and monasteries and Jesuit orders, all of which gave them the opportunity of abusing the religious feelings of the masses of the people and of using these masses against the Republic.

4. The fascists made use of the power in their hands, in particular during the period after October, in order to strengthen their positions in the state apparatus and, primarily, in the army and the civil guard.

5. The fascists were in constant receipt of financial assistance from the banks, big landlords and finance capitalist magnates.

6. The working class—the vanguard forces of the anti-fascist people's movement—have still by no means overcome the split in their ranks.

From the analysis of the sources of the strength of Spanish fascism, the Spanish revolutionaries determine the immediate, most important and most urgent, tasks of the anti-fascist people's front and of its leading force, the working class.

The working class links up in the closest fashion the struggle for their specific class interests and the struggle for the interests of the whole of the toiling people, for the complete development of the democratic rights of the broad masses of the people, for the speedy liberation of the peasant masses and the national minorities, for the complete destruction of fascism. In the daily struggle for their economic demands, for improvements in living and working conditions, higher wages, health insurance and unemployment benefits, and for the maintenance of the eight-hour working day, etc., the working class is acting as the determined, untiring vanguard fighter of the whole of the toiling people.

Concentrating their attention upon the immediate, important and urgent tasks, the working class regards the cause of all toilers, the cause of the democratic republic and democratic liberties, as their own personal concern. They are striving to secure that the strong majority of the people's front in the Cortes will immediately, with tremendous energy and determination, proceed to fulfil these tasks and not waste its strength on fruitless, formal arguments and boring legal discussions. They will support the majority of the people's front in the Cortes with all their weight, all their fighting power, all the surging activities of the people's movement outside parliament, they will support the Left

government when it puts through the program of the people's front, and on all determined measures adopted against fascism, and on behalf of the demands put forward by the masses of the people.

The working class demands that the government ensure the unhindered development of the anti-fascist struggle and not undermine this struggle like the first government of Azana, which gradually adopted the position of alliance with the reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie. The working class will subject the government to criticism if it begins to waver, to drag out and delay the solution of urgent tasks. With unflinching vigilance, it will frustrate all fascist plots against the republic, against the fulfilment of the program of the people's front, and will not allow the fascists to make use of the hotheads to provoke the masses into premature action, by misleading the masses and sowing confusion in their midst.

Only in the closest alliance with the peasant masses will the working class be able to ensure victory over fascism and the counter-revolution. It would be a fatal and tremendous mistake to disillusion the peasants again, who experienced such bitter disillusionment after the victory of the Left parties in January, 1931.

As the experience of the revolution in Spain has shown, the great task facing the toiling masses is the solution of the land question. While declaring themselves in favor of increased agitation on behalf of the confiscation without compensation of all big estates, the Spanish revolutionaries are demanding that the Cortes immediately and without compensation divide among the toiling peasants the landed estates of at least the aristocratic landlords, receiving in this connection the active assistance of the toiling peasants and agricultural laborers. This will deliver a devastating blow at Spanish fascism and is the real, economic, and political guarantee of the existence of the democratic republic. This and this alone, will convert the broad masses of the peasants into faithful allies of the working class in the struggle against the common enemy.

But this is not all. The toilers of Spain are demanding the re-election of the boards of management of the peasant cooperatives and that the enemies of the peasants be driven out of them, that speculators and middlemen be eliminated, and the peasants guaranteed more satisfactory prices for their agricultural products. The burden of taxation upon the peasantry must be immediately lightened, the wages of the agricultural workers must be raised, and the latter united into a strong organization, while social insurance must be extended to the villages, and measures adopted to defend the interests of tenants and to satisfy a number of their demands of the peasantry. If the people's front quickly and energetically lightens the position of the peasantry, if it quickly and energetically gives the peasants the opportunity of living lives worthy of human beings, the peasantry will link themselves up closely with the cause of the people's revolution and be prepared to defend it as their own cause.

The revolutionary workers respect the religious feelings of the broad masses of the people. But they consider it unjust for the Church in Spain to control such enormous wealth while the masses of the people are perishing of hunger and want. They consider it an insult to the

religious feelings of the broad masses that the churches so stubbornly cling to their own earthly wealth, while the peasantry are dying under the burden of poverty. The churches, the monasteries, the Jesuits, who are not ashamed to sit on the money-bags, while the people labor on empty stomachs, will be forced by the pressure of the masses to give up their riches to mitigate the want of the people. Therefore, the workers are fighting to secure that an auxiliary fund is created for the needy peasants and unemployed out of the treasures of the Church.

So as to frustrate fascism which, with the help of its agents, will lay plots in the state apparatus, and, first and foremost, in the army, against the republic, and will make use of the civil guard and the courts against the anti-fascist fighters, and so as to prevent sabotage of the people's front, the toiling masses, with the active assistance of the Republican soldiers and the government employees, will quickly, thoroughly and mercilessly, drive all monarchist and fascist elements out of the state apparatus, while all tried, absolutely reliable Republicans and anti-fascists will take their places. The toilers are correct in considering it an absolutely inadequate measure to give these monarchist and fascist elements worse jobs or to dismiss them with pensions by way of "punishment". They demand that these gentlemen be finally and irrevocably driven out of the state apparatus. They demand that relentless measures be adopted against financial plots organized by the counter-revolution in respect of foreign currency and the export of money abroad, and that the property of those found guilty be immediately confiscated.

Finally, the Spanish revolutionaries demand that the new government immediately satisfy the national demands of the Catalonians, the Basques and the Galicians, and create a strong alliance of free nations to defend the republic and democratic liberties.

It is essential for the consolidation of the victory and the final overthrow of fascism that these demands, linked up with the economic demands of the working class, be fulfilled.

In order to carry out these tasks and endow the turbulent movement of the people with growing fighting power, the proletarian organizations call for the stronger consolidation of all the forces of the people's front and the creation of a strong organizational base. Only if the workers' and peasants' alliances cease to be scattered, narrow, anemic organizations and become the living organs of the people's front, elected by the masses and living the same lives as the masses, if they cover the organized and unorganized workers and peasants of all currents, if they are the embodiment of the will of the broad people's movement, will they, in practice, ensure that a united struggle of the masses of the people is carried on against fascism, and serve as the guarantee for the further unfolding of the people's revolution.

However, the proletarian organizations are at the same time confronted with the task of mustering their own ranks more closely, and making every effort still further to consolidate the united front, to make it invincible, and once and for all, to overcome the ruinous split. The united front not only with the Socialists, but with the Syndicalists who, in spite of the negative position adopted by their leaders, in spite of the fatal traditions planted by their leaders, voted for the people's front



and are taking part in the anti-fascist people's movement; the rapid creation of a united trade union organization, which the Socialist, Communist, Anarchist, Syndicalist and non-party workers will join; the struggle for the united, consolidated, revolutionary party of the proletariat; these are the decisive preconditions necessary to ensure the victory of the revolution.

The Spanish proletariat have done great deeds. Their October battling deeply wounded fascism in Spain, and the wound has not healed up. Their purposeful, people's front policy, so full of revolutionary enthusiasm, undermined the government of the fascists, and set huge masses of the people into motion. But the Spanish proletariat are faced with a task of much greater dimensions. They have to double their efforts, to combine tremendous revolutionary courage with tremendous political wisdom and organizational firmness in order to have the opportunity of continuing the road they have taken and building a great, free and happy Spain.

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The victory of the people's anti-fascist front in Spain calls forth joy and enthusiasm among the working masses throughout the whole world. The news of the great successes of the anti-fascist movement in Spain will arouse the desire to resist and to fight against fascism among all proletarians and toilers.

"Fascism is a ferocious, but unstable power." Events in Spain have most convincingly confirmed these words used by Georgi Dimitroff. "To vote for the people's front is to vote for Dimitroff", shouted the agitators of the counter-revolutionary bloc during the election in Spain, striving in this way to scare the people. And the toiling masses replied: "We are voting for the people's front, for the cause of Dimitroff." *The events in Spain are a brilliant confirmation of the new tactical line of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern.*

Spain has shown that there is only one force that can check the fascist offensive and hurl it back. *This force is the mighty movement of the masses in the united working class front, and in the anti-fascist people's front. This force can, and will, conquer fascism.*

Reactionary Social-Democrats are trying to pass over in silence or even to distort this most important lesson of the Spanish events, which are of exceptional importance for the entire course of the class struggle in the capitalist countries.

The Bulletin of the Socialist International and a number of leading organs of the Social-Democratic Parties prefer to pass over in silence the fact that *the united proletarian front and the people's anti-fascist front exist and are being victorious in Spain.*

The reactionary elements of Social-Democracy will be as little able to conceal or distort this historic fact as to conceal and distort the other fact that fascism has been delivered a determined blow in just that country where the Communist and Social-Democratic workers offered resistance to the onslaught of fascism in a joint armed struggle. "There was no need to take up arms", howled the *Neue Vorwaerts*, the Brussels people, and other Social-Democratic newspapers at that time, in just-

ification of the capitulatory policy of the leaders of German Social-Democracy. Eighteen months have not yet passed, and the same Bulletin of the Socialist International has been forced to admit that "where the working class offered fighting resistance to the offensive of reaction, a rapid upsurge is possible even after defeat".

Facts are stubborn things. The world proletariat, in spite of all the efforts of the reactionary circles of Social-Democracy, are drawing their own conclusions from the Spanish events. And they will be in favor of the united working class front, in favor of the anti-fascist people's front, in favor of a joint, decisive struggle against fascist barbarity, against imperialist war, and against the capitalist offensive.

# The Results of the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of France

By ANDRE MARTY

**T**WO important tasks were set before the Communist Party of France by its own congresses and by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, namely:

1. To unite the masses so as to bar the way against fascism;
2. To consolidate the Party organizations and extend the influence of the Party.

The Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of France (which took place in January, 1936) was convened with a view to verifying the extent to which these tasks are being carried out, and of indicating the ways and means by which they could best be realized.

The rallying of the toiling masses with a view to barring the way against fascism urgently raises before the Communist Party of France the task of liquidating the split in the working class, and of freeing the non-proletarian toiling masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie and fascism.

The Congress verified how far these tasks are being fulfilled, from three points of view, namely: how far the united front tactics are being operated, how the struggle is being waged for the everyday needs of the proletariat and the middle sections of the population, and for trade union unity; and, finally, how the People's Front tactics are being pursued.

## THE UNITED FRONT

The Report of the C.C. of the C.P. of France,\* published for the Congress, called to mind all the efforts made by the Party in the struggle for the united front, and the resistance which had to be overcome over a period of thirteen years, before the tremendous results of the last two years could be achieved.

The work of the Congress as a whole and first and foremost the report of Comrade Thorez showed that:

1. Important successes are to be seen throughout the country in the development and consolidation of the united front; the united front is stronger and more widespread where the Communist Party is strong, and, on the other hand, where the Communist Party is weak, the united front movement is also poor;

2. Difficulties and tardiness are to be observed in a number of regions (North, Toulouse, etc.) in setting up the united front; unfortunately it must be put on record that this relates to those regions where the Communist Party is relatively weak and where the Socialist Party is strong;

3. The Communist Party has to overcome the strongest resistance

\* "Four Years of Struggle for Unity, Bread, Peace, and Liberty", p. 139 (December 15, 1935), published in Paris.



in those places where Trotskyists or elements under their influence made their appearance in the rank and file or regional organizations of the Socialist Party.

In an exceptionally important speech made from the tribune of the Congress in the name of the Executive Committee of his organization, Comrade Lequertier, assistant secretary of the Rhone Socialist organization, emphasized the firmness of the united front. We have in mind, in particular, the following statement made by him:

"Yes, comrades, in this everyday struggle shoulder to shoulder, a weapon is being forged which will inevitably lead us to unity." (*L'Humanité*, February 25, 1936.)

This is true. A united party cannot be set up except by way of united action. To the degree that united action is achieved, reformist illusions will gradually be liquidated and a platform will be elaborated which will make possible the formation of a united revolutionary party of the proletariat.

#### TRADE UNION UNITY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE IMMEDIATE DEMANDS OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Seventh Congress of the Comintern set the task of strengthening the united front by bringing about trade union unity.

But the Communists have always fought for trade union unity with the definite object of defending the bread of the workers. No other Congress of the C.P. of France has ever raised this question so pointedly as the Eighth Congress. Comrade Frachon raised the question in the following way:

"Look at the life of the worker; he gets up in the morning and switches on the electric light—this means that he begins by paying money to the electrical trust; he turns on the tap to wash—he is paying the water company; he boils his coffee, and is paying the gas company; he takes his seat in the Metro or on the tram—more payment; whether he is eating or sleeping, he must constantly pay his tribute to capital. When his wife goes to the market or to the stores, she is making her payment to capital, she is paying indirect taxes on articles of consumption. Consequently, we shall win the confidence of the workers, the confidence of all toilers, if we learn how to intervene in defense of their interests on all these occasions."

Of course, Frachon emphasized the point that our main efforts should be directed towards work in the factories, because it is precisely there that the workers are subjected most severely to capitalist exploitation.

So as to show what the attitude of the Communists should be, Frachon gave concrete examples instead of generalizations. Thus, for example, he showed how, in a big industrial center, a Communist carrying on actively by himself over a period of three years was able, as a result, to get a Party organization formed, to set up a branch of the unitary metal workers' trade union, and, last year, to launch a struggle for wages and win a victory (Saint-Chamond—Loire).

How must the People's Front organization be used to defend the bread of the workers?

Frachon told of an example when at a moment when a big strike\* was seriously threatened with being broken, the People's Front municipality in the town of St. Etienne not only organized material assistance, but also helped to organize a mighty demonstration which, as a result of the pressure it brought upon the public authorities, forced the employers to grant concessions.

Frachon once again cleared up the question of the attitude of the Communists in the trade unions:

"We do not want to issue orders in the trade unions. We want to be active in them, using all our rights as members of the trade unions. But if we demand that we should be granted all the rights to which members of the trade unions are entitled, it is precisely because we Communists take great tasks and obligations upon ourselves." (*L'Humanité*, January 24, 1936.)

Frachon declared that we want to make unity still stronger in the trade unions, and pointed out that to this end the members of the former Unitary General Confederation of Labor intended, at the Trade Union Unity Congress held on March 2, to put forward the program of the People's Front, supported by both confederations of labor, as the basis of the program of struggle for everyday demands.

In supporting this proposal, the Congress of the C.P. of France showed that:

1. It correctly understood how Communists should work to bring about, and especially to maintain, trade union unity;

2. Despite the fact that the development of the economic struggle in France has lagged behind the mass anti fascist movement, never yet in the history of the Party has the mass work of Communists for the successful defense of the immediate demands of the workers and of all toilers been so correctly understood and so well applied as today. Here is one of many examples: three years ago in Marseilles, out of 22,000 dockers only a few were Communists. A short time ago our comrades led a big strike of dockers who forced the employers to satisfy almost every one of their demands.

#### THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The struggle for *bread* cannot and must not be separated from the struggle for liberty, and so a most important part of the work of the Congress was devoted to the following main problems confronting the workers and the French people, namely: "What is the explanation of the economic crisis and the crisis in the sale of agricultural products? What is the cause of unemployment, poverty, and ruin among the toilers in town and country? Why is there no future for the working youth? Why is there a cultural and moral decline in the country? And this, while our country abounds in riches! How can the working class and the people make their way out of this situation?"

These questions were the subject of the three main reports at the

\* This refers to the strike which took place last year of 7,000 textile workers in Roanne, near St. Etienne.

Congress. First and foremost we have in mind the report made by Comrade Thorez which covered all these problems, then the report made by Comrade Renaud Jean on questions concerning the peasantry, and, finally, the report made by Comrade Jacques Duclos on the youth.

In his report, Comrade Thorez developed the line taken by him in his speech at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. Comrade Thorez dwelt in particular on a number of complicated questions, in particular on the question of the government of the People's Front. He pointed out that:

"... the government of the People's Front will be a government which will liquidate the fascist menace, disarming and securing the real dissolution of the armed bands; a government which will *make the rich pay* and put an end to the dictatorship of the big banks; a government relying for the fulfilment of this twofold task upon the activity of the masses outside parliament, upon the organization of People's Front committees. This government will afford full opportunity of agitation and propaganda, organization and activity to the working class and to its Communist Party."

The question was dealt with by Comrade Thorez in an article by him published in our magazine.\*

A characteristic feature of all the reports was that they were delivered in popular language, and there was a strong desire for unity expressed in all of them.

It is impossible to bring the small and middle peasantry into the People's Front unless the Communists show themselves in the numerous peasant organizations to be the best defenders of the peasantry on the basis of a concrete and understandable program, but this requires that the Communists must fight for united action in the villages. This point was explained by Comrade Renaud Jean as follows:

"Let us eradicate sectarian sentiments, and so sweep away the political jobbery which has been planted in the villages by the servitors of capital. As far as the Communist is concerned, the toiling peasant remains an oppressed toiler whether he goes to church or not, and whether he is a Left or a Right. The God-fearing Catholic peasant is the brother of the Communist peasant, while the landowner, even though he may be a non-believer, remains their common enemy. The Communists will play the role of a unifying factor in the village, the divisions in which are provoked by the enemies of the peasantry." (Renaud Jean: *The Alliance of the French Peasants*, p. 45.)

During the Congress an example was given of the work of the mass peasant organization in the county of Lot. This organization has 10,000 members. Its secretary is a Communist. He is the most popular figure in the whole of the county. Peasants with Right inclinations, who comprise the majority in the county, say the following about him: "He is not like the other Communists: he doesn't engage in politics in his committee, but defends our interests." This inspired Comrade Rochet

\* See *The Communist International*, No. 3, March, 1936.



to declare: "He is certainly different from the Communist as depicted by the bourgeois press, but he is precisely the kind that all Communists in the village should become."

The Congress adopted a similar position—namely of the struggle for unity—on the question of the young generation, on the question of uniting the revolutionary youth into one organization.

The Congress considerably advanced the revolutionary and foremost traditions of the proletariat, of the youth and of the French people, for we, the Communists, are the heirs of these traditions. In his brilliant report, Comrade Jean Duclos spoke of the heroic revolutionary past of the French youth.

All this still further increased the proletarian internationalism of our Party. The report\* on the activities of the delegation of the Communist Party of France in the Comintern showed the close link which exists between the activities of the proletariat in all countries, the international importance of the successes of the People's Front in France, and the increased work of the Comintern to bring about united action on an international scale.

Two examples are characteristic of this point: the struggle against fascism in connection with support to the Asturian uprising, and the struggle for peace in connection with the war which Italian fascism is conducting in Ethiopia.

The greetings sent by the Congress to Comrades Stalin, Dimitroff and Thaelmann were imbued with a deep spirit of internationalism, and with boundless loyalty to the Communist International.

The Eighth Congress of the C.P. of France was a congress of unity, a congress of struggle against fascism and reaction, for national and international proletarian unity, for unity among the toiling peasantry, for unity among the youth, and for the unity of all sections of the people in the People's Front. The Congress emphasized the manner in which we had formed the People's Front and thus indicated how further work must be conducted to extend it.

The published report of the Central Committee presented a detailed picture of the development of the mass anti-war and anti-fascist movement which grew up after the Amsterdam Congress in 1932. In the main, this report summed up the results of the mass movement in France in the years 1934 and 1935. During the six months of 1934 from February to July, 688 demonstrations and meetings took place in which 2,801,200 people participated, besides the general strike of February 12, in which 4,000,000 people took part. This is a glorious and moving achievement.

The appeal of the Communist Party, the only one of its kind at that time, which called upon the workers of Paris to come out onto the streets on February 9, 1934, called forth a warm and mighty response from the masses. The movement of the People's Front rapidly embraced the big proletarian centers and small provincial towns. Every week, two or three demonstrations took place (June-July, 1934). The barriers which separated the Socialist workers from the Communist workers were swept away by the proletarian anti-fascist hurricane in the process of united action. Barricades sprang up everywhere, and fighting lasted for five,

\* A report about the activity of the delegation of the C.P. of France in the E.C.C.I. was made at the Congress by Comrade Marty.—Ed.

six and seven hours. Some were killed. Hundreds of our comrades were wounded. But every drop of the workers' blood which stained the old roads of the towns and villages of France cemented the united and the People's Front still more firmly. "Here the fascists cannot pass!" exclaimed the toilers with hatred and anger. From the heart of the crowd a mighty call rang out: "Soviets—everywhere!"

The fascists did not pass. The agreement regarding joint struggle against the fascists, concluded between the Communist and Socialist Parties, only gave official shape to the unity which had already been achieved in practice. This flame of revolutionary struggle, this modest heroism, these speeches of the delegates of the Congress were a living illustration to the figures given in the report of the C.C., which showed that the united front in France was not brought about in offices, but was hammered out by us in the struggle alongside the Socialist workers and all the toilers of France.

#### FIRST RESULTS

What were the results noted by the Congress? The first attacks of fascism were repulsed in France, and a certain amount of confusion manifested itself in the ranks of the fascists. On the day the Congress of the Party was opened (January 22) the Laval government fell. A special resolution passed by the Congress pointed out that:

"Our Party, the initiator of the People's Front, can regard the resignation of M. Laval as the result of its activities in defense of the people." (*L'Humanité*, January 25, 1936.)

So fell the third government, the third to come to power to serve fascism, after February, 1934. The government which has taken its place differs sharply from it. Even if Sarraut wanted to play the role played by Laval he could not do so: the new government has accepted the principle of dissolving the fascist leagues.

As the same resolution of the Congress emphasized:

"... the middle sections of the population, whose will exerted tremendous influence over the decision of the E.C. of the Radical Party, joined forces with the proletariat in order to force Laval to go."

Can we be satisfied with these results?

Of course not! The danger remains as great as before. Consequently the Congress considered it necessary to add the following:

"The Communist Party unmasks the maneuvers of the financial oligarchy which is organizing the flow of gold abroad and is menacing the stability of the franc by continuing the blackmailing methods thanks to which Laval was able to remain in power for many months. . . . The great task which events today raise before us is to organize the broad masses of the people into numerous committees. Herein lies the real guarantee that democratic liberties will be defended, and not in proposals to take part in the government, proposals which, unfortunately, are more and more frequently being made by organizations which pretend to belong to the working class."

On the other hand, serious work in the villages is only beginning. The People's Front still does not cover the majority of the peasants. In the army and in the fleet there are still no committees to defend the constitution, committees such as were proposed by the demonstration of July 14, 1935, in view of the serious consolidation of the positions of fascism among the officers, soldiers and sailors.

#### THE GROWTH OF THE PARTY

One of the Secretaries of the C.C., Comrade Gitton, made a special report about the position inside the Party from the viewpoint of organizational work and the education of Party cadres. He declared that, with a few rare exceptions, the Communist Party of France is growing as a whole, and in every region and every district.

*The growth in the membership of the Communist Party and of its influence is taking place as a result of the mass movement of the People's Front, which is winning over new sections of the population and freeing them from the influence of the reactionaries.*

Why is the Communist Party growing? Because it is participating in the solution of all questions, big and small, which concern the lives of all sections of the population and, of course, first and foremost, of the workers.

In its work among the unemployed our Party has, since the Seventh Congress of the C.I., besides adopting general measures in defense of the unemployed, besides all that it has succeeded in wrenching from the state, been trying to give direct assistance to the unemployed. Thus, for example, in Columbus (Seine), all the municipal and canton councillors, members of the Communist Party and participants in the People's Front, collected funds for the unemployed during the course of one whole day. The unemployed mutual aid committees in Begneaux, established at the initiative of the Communists, collected 7,000 francs, a great deal of clothing (new and second-hand) and foodstuffs.

On Christmas eve, parties were organized almost everywhere, the children were given toys, the unemployed were helped with gifts of provisions, the majority of the provisions and toys being presented by the small and middle traders. This represents quite a good barrier against the increase of fascist influence!

One of the delegates of the Paris urban conference spoke of the work of his street cell, which has formed two street committees and two house committees. This is what he said about the activities of these house committees:

"The house committee, formed six months ago, has obtained the installation of new rain-pipes. A new system of drain-pipes has been installed instead of the previous system which was a hotbed of infection. The flooring has been mended, and a tap which used to flood the staircases has been mended. The ceilings were repaired and the windows altered. The caretaker used to be hostile to us. But instead of opening hostilities against her, we said that she must be neutralized. But how? We supported her demands, and arranged for the roof of her house to be mended. An architect went over all of the apartments. Rents were lowered in one case from 800 francs to 640, and in



another from 800 to 450 francs. Rents of 1,500 francs were reduced to 900. The house-owner recognizes the House Committee."

Thus the Communists take part in solving all these petty housing difficulties which trouble the workers, and are winning their confidence through their actions. It should be noted that besides work in the factories, in the two street committees and two house committees, the cell in question distributes *L'Humanité* and the local newspaper and recruits members for the Party.

The Communists explain what will be done to solve a number of problems which affect Greater Paris and the lives of the five million of its inhabitants, when the proletariat set up a Soviet Government in France. But besides this, the Communists talk about what must be done right now, today, what can be achieved immediately to help lighten the conditions of the poor. This sort of activity, which relies upon the experiences of the successful work of the Communist municipalities, draws considerable sections of the population to us who, up to now, have looked upon Communism as a bogey.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE PARTY

The platform of the Communist Party has been widely popularized. For example, in October, 1934, the Communist Party of France issued over 1,800,000 copies of the Party program in connection with the elections to the regional councils. The Communist Party also published 8,603,000 copies of nine pamphlets on the questions of war, fascism, the emergency decrees, and wages, problems which are of interest to the small traders, the tax-payers, the peasantry, the youth, the ex-service-men and the unemployed. The Communist Party issued 7,774,000 leaflets for the municipal elections in May, 1935.

The Communist Party press has grown: today the Party has 38 weekly provincial newspapers with a total circulation of 180,000 copies. These papers are becoming mass organs. Thus, for example, the *Rouge Midi*, the Marseilles regional newspaper, which was a four-page paper with a circulation of 2,500 copies in 1934, now comes out in four editions, in a six-page paper, and has a circulation of 14,000 copies.

Another example is the *Avangard*, the weekly paper of the Young Communist League, with a circulation of 43,000, a circulation that has doubled since last year. This newspaper has now become the largest of all the French youth newspapers. It exists exclusively on the income it receives from retail sales and from the subscriptions made by its regular readers. The whole of the editorial staff consists of a total of two persons, who have rallied to themselves 25 comrades working in the factories, and 400 workers, peasants, students and soldiers who act as its correspondents.

The Party's voice is heard everywhere: in the big works, and in small villages. *L'Humanité*, with its average daily circulation of 240,000 copies, occupies the fourth place for distribution among all the political newspapers in France, and first place in Paris. On Sundays the number of copies of *L'Humanité* sold has increased by 90-100,000, thanks

to the work of the *l'Humanité* Defense Committees, which are tireless in distributing the newspapers on the streets and from house to house. The financial side of the activities of *l'Humanité* during 1934 is expressed by a figure representing half a million francs clear profit.

After the May elections, the number of Communist municipal councils increased to 297.\* In addition, the number of Communists who became municipal councillors, forming minorities in 448 municipal councils, is 1,044. After the May elections, the number of Communist municipal councils in the Seine county increased from 9 to 27 (covering a total of 918,000 inhabitants in the populated points), while the number of reactionary municipal councils dropped from 52 to 35. In Paris itself, the Communist Party obtained 100,000 votes more than any other party. At the last elections in Marseilles, the Communist Party secured 20 per cent of the total number of votes cast (16,500 against 6,000 at the last elections), which gave us five mandates in the regional elective bodies, and one seat in the Chamber of Deputies.

The growth of the influence of the Party is such that the bourgeois press, whose representatives were allowed into the Congress, printed lengthy reports of the sittings of the Congress. The *Temps*, a newspaper controlled by the "Heavy Industries' Committee", devoted one or two columns to the Congress every day.

The solidarity of the Party and its ideological unity were expressed in the unity displayed on all questions by the delegates. It was also manifested in the unanimous approval of the report of the C.C. and the unanimous acceptance of greetings to Comrades Stalin and Dimitroff. Even the bourgeois press was forced to recognize the unanimity of the Congress.\*\*

#### PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AND CADRES

The Party organization has grown into a big force: the Party has 74,000 members, and the Young Communist League about 25,000. In October, 1935, there were 776 factory cells and 3,445 street cells, as against 586 factory and 2,139 street cells in October, 1934.

During the years 1933-35, the C.C. received membership dues, contributions from Parliamentary deputies, income from the sale of literature and from subscriptions to its publications, to the amount of 6,990,096 francs 10 centimes. Approximately 7,000,000 francs literally collected in centimes! And this, during the years of the crisis, when the conditions of the workers were so hard!

The following figures show the growth of the Party: in the course of two years, the five Parisian districts increased their membership from 7,500 to 22,000 members. The organization of Paris Ville, the largest of our district organizations, with 5,500 members, is growing rapidly. Every local organization in the working class districts attached to it, has no less than 550 members. The position is just as good in the Paris-

\* This figure covers the results in three towns with populations of 45,000, one town with a population of 70,000, and two towns with population of 80,000.

\*\* "Never before have political parties and groupings been in such a state of uncertainty and vacillation. . . . There is a Right wing in each of them which is fighting against the Left, and vice versa. . . . Not a single person, not a single party, knows clearly what is wanted; the only exception is the Communist Party, which is striving to establish Soviet power in France." (From the leading article of *Journee Industrielle*, January 29, 1936.)

Ouest which is successfully competing with Paris-Ville for the first place.

After the split organized by Doriot in the beginning of 1934, the number of Party members in Saint-Denis fell to 240. Today it has once more risen to 650.

The Marseilles regional organization (which covers the counties of Bouches-du-Rhone, Var and Vaucluse) is developing most rapidly of all. The speedy correction of the line of the leadership which was brought about by Comrade Billoux made it possible to develop the anti-fascist campaign\* and the struggle for the everyday demands of the toilers. As a result the membership of the Communist Party in Marseilles grew from 200 to 2,000, in Toulon from 56 to 540. In two years, the membership of the Party in this region grew from 1,700 to 5,500. Party publications to the value of 50,000 francs (including 38,000 francs in Marseilles) are sold throughout the region as against 17,000 francs previously.

There are only two regions where the position is at a standstill: in Alsace-Lorraine and in the county of Lot-et-Garonne.

Over two-thirds of the Party membership have been in the Party for not more than three years. In view of the development of all of our activities, this fact raises before us most keenly the question of cadres.\*\*

New cadres, a new type of active Party members, are being created from among the youth or from among the old leading Party members and toilers engaged upon concrete, stubborn Bolshevik work. In order to give an idea of the growth of our Party cadres, we will give here the composition of the bureau of one of our local committees in Paris. The bureau consists of six members. The general secretary of the local committee is a postal worker, member of his trade union since 1908, and has been in the Party for 17 years. The assistant secretary is a laborer, member of his trade union since 1918, and has been a member of the Party for 17 years (when he was arrested the laborers in Paris conducted a half-day strike demanding his release). The secretary for organizational questions is a metal worker who has been a member of a trade union for three years and of the Party for two years. The fourth member of the bureau of the local committee is also a metal worker, a member of his trade union since 1917, and of the Party for 16 years. The fifth is a metal worker, member of his trade union since 1921, with 12 years' standing in the Young Communist League and the Party. The sixth and last member of the bureau—the treasurer of the local committee—is a retired postal worker. This is the composition of the local bureau, which is composed of trusted political leaders and proletarians. The local committee consists of the members of the bureau enum-

\* On February 12, 1934, 100,000 workers demonstrated on the streets of Marseilles.

\*\* The following is the social composition of the Congress delegates: over 50 per cent—workers engaged in private capitalist enterprises (out of 668 delegates; 215 metal workers, 55 builders, 20 textile workers), about 10 per cent of the delegates—civil servants (including 43 railwaymen), 96 peasants and agricultural laborers, 31 brain workers (teachers, engineers, doctors, etc.).

The Party standing of the delegates is as follows: out of 503 delegates who filled in questionnaires, 6 per cent joined the Party before the Tours Congress, i.e., have been more than 15 years in the Party. This includes old Party workers like Nicod, who fought during the imperialist war under the direct influence of Lenin, first against the "Sacred Alliance", and then for the affiliation of the Party to the Third International, 130 (26 per cent) of the delegates have a Party standing of over 13 years. The age: over half of the delegates were between the ages of 31 to 40. (*L'Humanite*, January 25, 1936.)



erated above and 12 additional members with a Party standing of from two to five years.

Thus a combination is taking place in the Communist Party, of young active Party members and old Party members who fought during the war against class collaboration, who joined the Party at its formation, and who worked in it during the first, extremely difficult years of its formation. As Comrade Thorez pointed out in his concluding speech at the Congress, the foundation of the Party is made up of a combination of the old members of the Party well-known to the masses—representative of whom, for example, is Marcel Cachin—and such Party workers who were trained in the trade union struggle as Racamond, Monmousseau, Frachon and Sépard, for instance, together with the younger arrivals like Thorez, Duclos and others who came to the Party after the war with all their fiery revolutionary enthusiasm.

How did these new cadres, this new type of cadres, grow up? First of all they were encouraged in their growth by the correct political line of the C.C. and the mass political work which was launched on the basis of this correct political line. A rich growth has now sprung up on this fertile soil. How was the work of educating the Party cadres conducted?

First of all the C.C. in 1931 set up a commission to deal with the question of cadres. The commission set itself the task of breaking down the resistance of insufficiently loyal people or of those who did not believe in the strength of the Party, which was hindering the growth of the Party. At the same time, with the support of the propaganda department of the C.C. this commission created a network of Party schools. Finally, the commission to deal with the question of cadres helped the Party committees which did not know how to distribute their people properly. But the most essential point in the training of cadres is what has been done since February, 1934. First and foremost the Party organizations have been divided up into smaller units, because the previous district and local organizations were too large. This measure forced the Party committees really to lead, and this encouraged the more rapid growth of cadres in the smaller districts and locals.

What particularly encouraged the growth of cadres has been the sharp daily mass struggle conducted by the Party since February, 1934. Our comrades take part in the sessions of the coordination committees of the Communist and Socialist Parties, where not infrequently they find themselves confronted by opponents of the united front and united action. The work in the united trade unions demands new qualities in our Party workers. In the People's Front committees we have to be in possession of still greater abilities and skill in quickly finding the correct and necessary arguments, for there are elements in these committees which are very far from the working class. There have been a number of failures in these committees, when the Communists have proved unable to avoid adopting decisions hostile to unity. These mistakes were subjected to criticism and explanation at the information conferences and the meetings of the Party committees. Our comrades are learning, because they do not want to suffer defeat on the numerous questions of united action, the People's Front, the demands of the toilers, etc. They are learning in the course of the struggle. This is how new

Party cadres are being hammered out either from the old Party workers who have managed to re-adapt their work, or from among the youth. This, perhaps, is the most important lesson which arises out of the work of the Congress and of the numerous conferences which preceded it.

The Congress showed the degree of deep, conscious, stable confidence which the whole Party feels towards its C.C. On February 17, 1935, at the funeral of the victims of February 9 and 12, the workers cried out in the streets of Paris: "Long live the Central Committee!" and "Long live the Communist International!" Thus, confidence in the leadership of the Central Committee has been hammered out in the course of the mass struggle in the Party and among the proletarian masses which support it. As the successes of the Communist Party have increased, this confidence has grown and gathered strength.

The elections to the C.C. went off with enthusiasm. The fact that 34 old members of the C.C. and 3 reserves (9 new reserves were elected) were re-elected serves as a fresh proof of the unity of the Party and its leadership. This confidence in the Central Committee is, of course, also an expression of confidence in the Communist International, the political line of which the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France has always pursued.

Both from the political and the organizational point of view, the Communist Party of France is becoming the new type of mass revolutionary working class party which alone can lead the proletariat in the struggle for emancipation.

#### IMMEDIATE TASKS

The position in France remains serious. There is nothing to allow us to believe that the economic crisis can rapidly give way to a period of palpable improvement, apart from the usual Spring seasonal revival.

We may consider that the economic situation of France, which was hit by the crisis later than the other countries, still remains extremely difficult. There are no chances of any rapid or palpable improvement. The state budget deficit is expressed in the sum of 10-15,000 million francs (and we must also bear in mind the tricks which are played with the "Special articles of the Budget"). The financial position of the councils is disastrous. Despite the mass deportation of foreign workers which has been going on now for three years, the official statistics present a figure of 800,000 unemployed. The total amount of wages paid to all employed workers has dropped by one-third as against the 1930 figure. The danger of fascism is serious, as hitherto. The Communist Party of France has held back the offensive of fascism and proved that the way can be barred against fascism; but fascism is still not crushed. It is precisely in view of internal difficulties, precisely in view of a certain shrinking in the mass base of fascism, that the danger of insolent attacks by the fascists upon the anti-fascist organizations and newspapers, and even upon individual politicians, is now greater than ever before. We have proof of this in the attacks upon Blum.

The proletariat can put an end once and for all to fascism only by means of mass and united action. A powerful People's Front demonstration was the immediate reply of the masses to the attack upon Leon

Blum by the fascists. This demonstration proved that the masses of the French people understand that they alone can definitely put an end to the fascist menace. Hence the necessity of increasing mass work, of forestalling fascism, of strengthening the organizations and cadres of the Communist Party.

This requires that we liquidate all the remains of sectarianism, which are still to be found among the Communists who are working in the mass organizations.

On the other hand, in so far as the movement today has acquired such dimensions, the Party is in constant, permanent contact not only with the revolutionary workers, but also with sections of the population who are far from the proletariat. This circumstance may engender an overestimation of parliamentary or municipal activities which are not based upon the organized movement of the masses. During recent times, there has been a considerable influx of new members into the Party, full of enthusiasm, but still not sufficiently shaped; this creates the danger of mistakes and Right opportunist deviations.

The struggle against the war danger must be particularly increased, first and foremost in the sphere of mass work: the events in Tokio and on the Rhine most insistently demand this. The importance and role of these events have been explained exhaustively and precisely in the interview which Roy Howard was given by Comrade Stalin.

Comrade Billoux, the Secretary of the Marseilles regional organization, whose work was set forth as an example, correctly said in his speech at the Congress that:

"Our successes are only the beginning. We must consolidate unity of action and the People's Front, strengthen the trade unions, in order to make mass bodies of them. We have trebled the membership of our regional Party organization, which today numbers 5,500 members, but in Marseilles alone there are about one million inhabitants. . . . The success of the Marseilles regional organization shows that we can and must do more."

This is the position everywhere.

As hitherto, the question of cadres is one of foremost importance, which bears of no postponement. The influence of the Communist Party is growing so rapidly that the insufficiency of cadres is felt everywhere. Hence there arises the need of giving our cadres ideological training. Hence there also arises the necessity for extreme vigilance in relation to possible deviations, and the necessity of always being on our guard, in order not to allow any ideological contraband to penetrate to the mass and theoretical organs of our Party press.

The big achievements which we can already record show that the Communist Party of France possesses the necessary base for working better and developing still more rapidly; it will show that it is worthy of the high responsibility with which history has entrusted it.



# The Opponents of the United Front in England

By J. R. CAMPBELL

THE official Labor Party in Great Britain is still strongly opposed to the united front both nationally and internationally. It is therefore of importance to analyze the objections which are being put forward against the united front.

One of the arguments which was most frequently put forward during the general election was that a united front with the Communists would definitely antagonize the "floating" vote. The "floating" vote was the vote of electors who in previous contests had voted Liberal but who in the absence of a Liberal candidate might vote either for the National Government or for the Labor Party. Most of the people, it was contended, were opposed to revolution. If the Labor Party and the Communists were united, then the opponents of the Labor Party would contend that a vote for Labor is a vote for revolution. This, at any rate, is what the candidates of the National Government would say.

*Our reply* is that first of all we do not consider that such an "accusation" is a disgrace to the Labor Party. On the other hand, we assert that the National Government will always, *in all circumstances and by every means*, try to frighten the electors, not even stopping at downright lies. There is no means whereby we can prevent it having recourse to this misrepresentation. All that can be done is to ensure that this misrepresentation is exposed. The only proper reply to this is to give a more detailed explanation to the people of what is the program of action of the united front.

A large part of the ex-Liberal voters are workers. They cannot be won by attempting to make the Labor program resemble the program of the National Government as much as possible. Any attempt to do this will only facilitate the task of the National Government in winning over these wavering elements. The policy of the reactionary Labor leaders led to precisely this, as the 1935 election results have shown.

For the greater part of the year 1935 the Labor leaders had been following docilely behind the government on the burning questions of war and peace. As regards the struggle to improve the conditions of the workers and of the middle class, here also the official policy of the Labor leaders actually hardly differed at all from the policy of the National Government. On all these questions the Labor Party made no clear challenge to the government, which was therefore able to win a good number of the wavering voters.

If the Labor Party had sponsored a line for the maintenance of peace, as against the imperialist line of the National Government, if it had supported the peace policy of the Soviet Union, if it had supported the organization of a united front around these questions, then the

results would have been quite different. But actually the wavering elements of the population saw that the Labor Party had no clear line at all.

The National Government talked much about how it had aided "prosperity". There were still, however, 2,000,000 unemployed in the midst of this prosperity. The Labor Party had an unprecedented opportunity of showing how the government was obstructing "prosperity"—how it was refusing to embark on large-scale work schemes of social utility, how the abolition of the housing subsidy had held up the building of working class houses. Had the Labor Party taken part in organizing a powerful united front on the question of constructive work schemes, it could have shaken the government to its foundations. But the Labor Party had refused to build a united front, and as a consequence it was helpless when the government came out and extolled its arms policy as a means to providing work for the depressed trades of the country.

*It was the refusal of the Labor Party to build the united front on the questions of peace and work which enabled the government to retain the wavering elements on its side.*

\* \* \*

Another argument of Labor Party workers is that the building of a united front with the Communists will antagonize the middle class.

Our reply is that a united front for peace, against the fascist menace and against the robbery of the toilers by monopolist capital could have been a big point of attraction for the middle strata. A comprehensive works program sponsored by a united movement which looked as if it meant business, if it had incorporated some popular middle-class demands, would have won the sympathy of the middle class. That is the clear lesson of France and Spain and this experience could have been used in Britain if the Labor Party had taken part in forming a united front around a fighting program instead of giving a spectacle of impotence disguised as moderation.

Bearing that in mind, let us pass to consider the Labor leaders' policy in relation to winning the middle class. Has the Labor Party ever sought to investigate the problem of the toiling middle strata, with a view to formulating a concrete program which would win those wavering sections to the side of the workers? No, it has not. The Labor Party's sole means for winning the middle class is to make itself look like an ordinary "honest" capitalist party. Its candidates before the recent general election were told to "make no rash promises"—indeed, the distinguishing feature of the Labor Party's electoral program was that it was much less specific as to what the Labor Party could do in the event of its being elected than the election program of the National Government was. Thus, an attempt was made by the Labor Party to win the middle strata by "moderation", but the "moderate" manifesto and the "moderate" Labor speeches did not deal with any of the specific problems of the strata that such "moderation" was designed to win.

The Webbs' book on the U.S.S.R., where Communism is depicted as

the new civilization which will spread throughout the world, is the best reply to those who *think* that Communism is the bogey of the English intelligentsia. Amongst many of the professional organizations of the British middle class there is considerable interest in developments in the Soviet Union. In addition, the world economic crisis unleashed amongst the British intellectuals a wave of anti-capitalist criticism. It is true that the entire strata have not been affected in the same way. Nevertheless, it is nonsense to suggest that the middle strata can be "scared" by Communism as was the case a few years ago, that "Communism" is the bogey of the middle strata. *Communism is gradually winning the middle strata of our country to its side, attracting them and not driving them away.* This is the actual truth and not an imaginary state of affairs.

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Let us now turn to the arguments put forward by the *Daily Herald*, the herald of the reactionary leaders of the Labor Party, who are out at any cost to find reasons against the united front, against the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labor Party.

The first reason put forward by the *Herald* is the inconsistency of the Communist Party.

"A certain record of consistency is essential before cooperation can be profitably discussed. The madly swinging variations of Communist policy since 1934 give the impression that the Party leaders are fickle, dunderheaded and unashamedly opportunist."

The pseudo-Left I.L.P. is touchingly at one with the organ of the reactionary leaders of the Labor Party, the *Daily Herald*, in its attacks on the Communist Party. Our reply is that the Communist policy in the recent years has been directed in *one* direction—namely *breaking down the barriers to working class unity in Great Britain.* The *Daily Herald* apparently forgets that the Communist Party of England has never for a single moment ceased to strive to achieve this goal.

Every worker in the Labor Party knows of the numerous appeals for unity made by the Communists to the Labor leaders, and to individual local Labor Party organizations. All know of the struggle of the Communists to organize the National Unemployed Movement. All know of the struggle of the Communists for unity during the last general election. But the *Daily Herald* does not understand this question. The reactionary Labor leaders saw the "inconsistency" and the "swinging variations" of the Communist Party in other questions. On which questions? The following excerpt from the *Daily Herald* gives the reply.

"For fourteen years the Communists decried the League and with arrant stupidity tried to persuade the British working class to distrust and boycott it. Now they ask the workers to support the League."

*Our reply is:* the League of Nations before 1934 and the League of Nations after 1934 are *not one and the same thing.* Before 1934 the League of Nations was an institution of capitalist states alone,

whose chief aim was to prepare an anti-Soviet bloc, to suppress all movements for the independence of the small and oppressed peoples. The exit from the League of Nations of Japan and fascist Germany and the entrance into the League of the U.S.S.R. made it possible, under *certain definite conditions*, for the League of Nations to play the role of "an obstacle to the war danger" as Comrade Stalin put it.

The *Daily Herald* evidently considers it its merit that the Labor leaders supported the League of Nations when it was the center of anti-Soviet interventionist schemes. We, on the contrary, consider that the workers should have fought against these plans at that time.

Thanks to the entrance of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations, and because of its changed composition, it is possible for the workers, by developing the united front, by building a broad peace movement, to make of the League a certain obstacle—albeit very unstable and inconsistent—against the aggressive plans of the war-mongers.

But it is an unforgivable mistake to lay all hopes upon the League, which is composed in the majority of capitalist powers. It can play a certain positive role, only on condition that the struggle of the toiling masses for peace is developed, and that the broad people's front in all capitalist countries gives constant support to the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. Those who, like the *Daily Herald*, describe an imperialist Foreign Minister's speech as the "voice of Britain" (the *Herald's* description of Hoare's speech at Geneva last September), and who oppose the development of united action against the war policy pursued by the National Government, are wrecking, sabotaging the struggle for peace. Their past support of the League when it was a center of anti-Soviet intrigue was a disservice to the working class. Their present refusal to support the peace forces of the League, expressed in refusal to develop the united front struggle for peace, is a still greater disservice.

"For fourteen years they attacked democracy as unreal and Parliament as worthless. Now they wish to enlist in the ranks of the defenders of democracy," screams the *Herald*.

Now when did the Communists declare Parliament was worthless? Worthless for what? *The Communist Party has always striven for representation in Parliament*, because it has always recognized that Parliament can be used in order to fight against the policy of the capitalist class, to rally the mass movement outside Parliament in defense of the interests of the toilers and considered that by means of the mass movement concessions could be forced from Parliament, as was the case in the great unemployed agitation at the beginning of 1935.

*A considerable number of Labor leaders have, however, not infrequently, preached the worthlessness of Parliament and the impossibility of winning concessions from it, in the absence of a Labor majority.*

The Communist Party has never preached the worthlessness of Parliament in general, but we have always declared and do so today that Parliament is not, as the Labor leaders declare it to be, the means by which the transformation can take place of capitalism into socialism. The Communists see no reason for assuming that the ruling class will surrender their privileged position without a violent struggle, and the transfer to the fascist policy by a definite section of the capitalist class



in recent years proves this up to the hilt. But that is something quite different from announcing the "worthlessness" of Parliament in general.

When the Communists say that Parliamentary democracy is "unreal" for the toilers, they have in mind the indisputable fact that the suffrage under bourgeois parliamentarism does not give the majority of the people, the toilers, a real opportunity of making use of democracy, of exercising control over the mechanism of the bourgeois parliamentary state. This control is exercised by the class of capitalists, which controls the key positions in the state machine; the monarchy, the key positions in the navy, the air force, the army, the judiciary, the key positions in the bureaucracy, not to mention capitalist control over all the economic life of the country.

In that sense capitalist democracy is "unreal", i.e., control of the state does not really rest with the "people" but with the capitalists and their agents.

But Communists have always opposed to the unreal democracy of capitalism the real democracy of the Soviet system, based on the fact that the land, the banks and the key industries are social property, a democracy in which the key positions in the state apparatus, no less than in the economy of the country, are in the hands of the working class (and not monopolized by the exploiting class as is the case with capitalist democracy). This is a democracy in which the workers and the toilers generally, led by their revolutionary party, really lead the whole of the political and economic life of the country.

While comparing bourgeois democracy with true democracy, Soviet democracy, the Communists at the same time emphasize the fact that it is not a matter of indifference to the proletariat whether a fascist dictatorship or bourgeois democracy exists. Under bourgeois democracy the workers have opportunities, even though limited, of organizing, of holding public meetings and writing in the press. They have a certain opportunity of defending themselves against the arbitrary use of the state power (though most capitalist states have on their statute books emergency acts which deprive the worker of this opportunity in time of crisis).

There is nothing illogical therefore in criticizing parliamentary democracy from the standpoint of Soviet democracy, and yet being prepared to cooperate in the defense of parliamentary democracy—which cost the workers many sacrifices and many years of struggle—against fascism.

While the Labor leadership have always the phrases of "democracy" on their lips, they have, instead of protesting against the "old, feudal, anti-democratic "honors system", willingly participated in it. And it is not the first time that the *Daily Herald* allies itself with reactionary popularization of the monarchy.

*The Labor leaders who constantly spread all manner of illusions about parliamentary democracy not only do not defend it but help to undermine it, while the Communists who understand its limitations and its values do, in every way, rally the forces to its defense against fascism.*

"For fourteen years they tried to smash and supplant the Labor

Party and to discredit the trade union leadership. Now they apply for affiliation," cries the *Herald*.

The *Daily Herald* does not want to speak about how from 1920 to 1927 the Communist Party persistently applied for affiliation to the Labor Party; that until 1925 individual Communists were allowed to be members of the Labor Party and that affiliation was refused and that the Communists were driven out of the Labor Party so as to make it possible for it to continue peacefully in its non-working class, anti-working class policy.

That the Communists fought against the Labor leadership as bitterly as the Labor leadership fought against the Communists goes without saying. That was the case all over the world. Nevertheless many of the Communist Parties and Socialist Parties who fought each other in the past have now built the united front in the face of the menace of fascism and war. If Socialist Parties in other countries which in the past fought might and main against Communism are now in the united front with the Communist Party, why not in Britain? Many Labor Party workers recognize the justice of this. They are coming to see to an increasing extent that there can be no defense of peace and democratic liberties and rights without cooperation with the Communists inside Britain.

The *Herald's* argument can only have one meaning, namely, that the reactionary Labor leaders want the split in the working class movement to continue further.

This can be seen especially clearly from the reply of the Executive Committee of the Labor Party to the Communist Party's application for affiliation.

"After full consideration the National Executive Committee came to the conclusion that no circumstances had arisen to justify any departure from the decision registered by the Annual Conference at Edinburgh in 1922 when after a lengthy discussion a similar application for affiliation was rejected by 3,800,000 to 261,000."

"No circumstance has arisen"! Yet 1922 was a year when the world was just entering the period of the partial stabilization of capitalism, when Social-Democratic Parties were everywhere talking about an "era of peace and democracy", when they looked to the gradual attainment of a parliamentary majority to lead inevitably to the triumph of socialism ("the inevitability of gradualness" was what the Chairman of the 1922 Conference, Mr. Sidney Webb, called it). Compare that with the situation today when parliamentary democracy has disappeared in a number of European countries, when the fascist states are rushing mankind headlong into a new war, and when many Socialist Parties, realizing the terrible dangers of this situation, are entering into a united front with the Communist Party. "No circumstance has arisen"!

"The National Executive Committee is firmly convinced that any weakening in the Labor Party's defense of political democracy, such as the affiliation of the Communist Party would imply, would inevitably assist the forces of reaction, would endanger

our existing liberties and would retard the achievement of socialism in this country."

The National Executive Committee asserts that to have a united front with the Communists for the defense of democracy would prove that the Labor Party's defense of political democracy was weakening.

On the contrary, it would prove to millions, including many Labor Party workers, that the Labor Party is really prepared to defend political democracy, instead of letting it be undermined.

The rank and file of the Labor Party must realize where the policy of the reactionary leaders will take them. It will lead them to passivity in the struggle to maintain peace, to a refusal to beat off the attacks by bourgeois reaction and fascism against democracy, to demoralization in the ranks of the parliamentary Party and outside in the constituencies, to the complete impotence of the Labor Party.

That is why the rank and file of the Labor Party must defeat this iniquitous policy.

# The Truth About the Mensheviks

By P. LANG

## ON WHOSE SIDE DID THE MENSHEVIKS FIGHT DURING THE CIVIL WAR?

### I. THE ANTI-SOVIET CAMPAIGN IN THE SOCIALIST PRESS

AFTER listening to the claims made by the Russian Mensheviks on the Soviet government, the January Session of the Bureau of the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International decided "to give the fullest publicity to the information concerning the persecutions of the Russian comrades". Accordingly, the Bulletin of the Commission of the E.C. reprinted a leading article from the Menshevik *Socialistichesky Vestnik*\* adding the following heading: "Instead of the United Front, a Fresh Wave of Terror in Soviet Russia." Thus, the campaign against the united front has begun under the guise of a struggle against Soviet terror.

The campaign is now being carried on in both the Socialist and bourgeois press. Even Hearst, the international gangster, has recognized the advantage of taking part in the crusade to "liberate Socialist ideas in the Soviet Union". And for the purpose he is using the services of Trotsky.

Of course, the whole aim of the campaign is being hidden from the masses by its organizers. For the reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy can hardly say to the workers: avoid the struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism, and against the war danger, and occupy yourselves with the task of transforming the Soviet government into a government that the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Trotskyists, etc., will approve of.

In words these leaders declare that their aim is to "create favorable conditions for the *possibility* of setting up the united front". But who is shouting louder than anybody else about this? Precisely the Right Social-Democratic leaders who are well known to be the most malicious opponents and saboteurs of the united front!

And can anyone at all imagine that the bourgeois press of all currents, including the Hearst press, would have responded so unanimously to the call of the Bureau of the Second International, if the call had in any measure in view the interests of the working class, and was aimed at strengthening unity in their ranks?

There are two articles which point to the way preparations for the campaign were carried on among the Social-Democratic leaders, namely, the leading article in the November issue of the *Socialistichesky Vestnik*, and an article written by Kautsky entitled "Reflections on the United Front" printed in the November-December issue of the organ of the German Social-Democrats, the *Zeitschrift fuer Sozialismus*.

\* No. 1, 1936.



## II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN

The leading article in the *Socialistichesky Vestnik* explains how it came about that it was precisely at the end of 1935 that the Mensheviks once more became the object of the particular love and care of the leaders of the Second International. Magdeline Paz, a Socialist woman with Trotskyist sentiments, made an attempt to disorganize the united front at the June World Congress of Writers held in Paris, on the pretext "of defending freedom of thought and speech in the Soviet Union". The attempt was a failure. Paz, according to the *Socialistichesky Vestnik* made a "fiery protest", she display "noble courage", but "the audience was completely under the influence of the Bolsheviks", and the Trotskyist intrigue was unanimously rejected. Then Paz resorted to the press, to the Menshevik Peskin: "Do you know," she asked, "any comrades who could help me—who could give me names, facts, dates, figures, geographical points?" . . . The *Socialistichesky Vestnik* replied that it would be glad to be of service to her.

"We have an abundance of facts," the Mensheviks assured her. But about three months passed, and it was clear to everybody that they were not in a position to fulfil the order placed before them. The opponents of the united front needed to stage a "wave of Red terror" but the *Socialistichesky Vestnik* could not give them more than about a dozen names of alleged victims. They needed a new wave of terror, but the *Socialistichesky Vestnik* hadn't a single new name of any Menshevik who had been arrested, exiled or in any other way hurt. The Mensheviks even dragged Kranichfeld into the campaign, as "a prominent member of the youth league", although, according to their own words, he had tried to penetrate the youth movement 15 years ago.

The Right leaders of international Socialism remind one of Gogol's hero Chichikov: they buy up "dead souls" from the Russian Mensheviks.

"For many years now we have refrained from publishing these facts and figures" . . . writes the *Socialistichesky Vestnik*. But why is it that during the last few years the Mensheviks have "refrained" from spreading their gossip? Because, replies the *Socialistichesky Vestnik*, the Second International ceased to react to their reports "with powerful protests by the parties, unions, congresses, and the press". "Thus the silence of international Socialism was and is the inevitable cause of our silence as well." In other words, when the demand drops off, fabrication is curtailed. This applies to all anti-Soviet fabrications. This also applies to the Menshevik legends about Soviet terror.

Indeed, from the year 1932 until the last few months in 1935 the Second International displayed a certain amount of caution—if we exclude a number of outbursts like the campaign in defense of the murderers of Comrade Kirov—as regards openly supporting the counter-revolutionary work of the Mensheviks.

What directly forced it to act in this way?

## III. THE DOWNFALL OF THE SPONSORS OF THE MENSHEVIKS IN 1931

In the Spring of 1931 the case of the Menshevik underground organization, the so-called union center, was heard in the Supreme

Revolutionary Court of the U.S.S.R. It revealed before the eyes of the workers of all countries a picture of the criminal wrecking activities of the Mensheviks and their political bloc with the interventionist kulak-Socialist-Revolutionary and big capitalist parties.

Before this trial, approximately since 1929, the E.C. of the Second International had been conducting an almost unbroken, unbridled campaign in defense of the kulaks, the wrecking specialists, and later the arrested Mensheviks. At that time the slogan under which the campaign was conducted was "Against the New Wave of Stalinist Terror"\* The E.C. of the Second International engaged in particularly feverish activities during the trial.

It tried to prevent the case being heard. In a telegram addressed to the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., Vandervelde declared: "I am instructed by the E.C. of the Labor and Socialist International to lodge a most energetic protest against this violence."

It tried to bring disrepute upon the evidence given by the accused during the preliminary investigation. "The E.C. of the Labor and Socialist International", it stated in the same telegram, "has received very serious information concerning the bad treatment meted out to the accused in the prison in which they are confined."

He went finally even so far as to run the risk of openly lining himself up, in the face of the whole world, with the action of the accused. "The very fact," ran the telegram, "that persons, whose entire previous behavior protests against the indictment leveled against them, have been brought before the revolutionary court, is a scandalous abuse of force."

Despite all the efforts of the E.C. of the Second International, the trial, as we know, went on to the end. In the public sessions of the court, all the accused without exception, old, well-known Menshevik leaders, confessed themselves guilty of the indictment made against them of carrying on wrecking and interventionist work, on instructions received from the Menshevik center abroad. They confessed their serious crime against the Land of Soviets and the international labor movement.

Is it surprising, then, that after such a political scandal, the leaders of the Second International preferred, at least for a time, "to lie low"? Is it surprising that they ceased to "react" so thoughtlessly and incautiously to the Menshevik gossip?

#### IV. TO CRUSH THE UNITED PROLETARIAN FRONT

But if the campaign "against Soviet terror" failed so disgracefully in 1929-31, what can the organizers of the campaign expect now, in 1936? Can they repeat the same arguments as they put forward *then*, to widen the breach among the international proletariat?

At that time they wrote:

"Socialist workers of all countries are seized with alarm for the fate of the Russian revolution. They hear about *the starvation which is rife in your towns, they know that often your*

\* The then Chairman of the E.C. of the Second International published an article in *Verwaerts* in January, 1930, under this heading.

*working conditions are worse than those of the workers in capitalist countries."*\*

Can the organizers of the campaign repeat these words *now*, when the new socialist life in the Soviet Union is blossoming forth as never before in the history of mankind on the basis of a radical improvement in the material and cultural conditions of the working class? Can they do so now, when even such an individual as the Menshevik leader, Abramovich, has been compelled to declare that he refuses to continue the "historic discussion that has been going on now for 18 years between the Bolsheviks and their Socialist opponents" on the question of the standard of living of the masses in the Soviet Union?

*At that time* they wrote:

"They (the Socialist workers) are aware of the bankruptcy of the *violent methods of collectivizing* the peasantry. . . . The Labor and Socialist International fears that if this fatal policy is continued *a breach will be formed between the two classes* upon which the Russian revolution is based, namely, between the workers and the peasants."\*\*

Can they repeat these words *now* when the news of the victory of the collective agriculture of the U.S.S.R. is being carried throughout the whole world, when as a result of this victory of social ownership, both in town and country, the Soviet state has become stronger and more powerful than any other state can ever be, under any other social system?

At that time they wrote in defense of the *wrecking specialists* as follows:

"A panic has taken hold of the masses of the intelligentsia in the service of the Soviets. They are more and more coming to the conviction that *the Soviet government aims at destroying all the former 'specialists' who are of any importance at all and of dooming the others to slow death in prisons and exile.*" \*\*\*

Can they repeat these nonsensical assertions now that at the same time as there is to be seen the growth of Soviet industrial and technical intellectuals, the old technical specialists in the Soviet Union have determinedly taken their stand for honest collaboration with the Soviet government, and are working along with the working class? \*\*\*\*

They threw these slanderous accusations up in the face of the Soviet workers *at that time*, declaring in official documents that they were doing so on the direct *instructions* of the Social-Democratic workers.

Can they do this again, now, when in consequence of the tragic experiences of the working class in the capitalist countries, and the victorious experiences of the construction of socialism in the U.S.S.R.,

\* Appeal of the E.C. of the Labor and Socialist International "to the Soviet Workers", May 1930.

\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\* Vandervelde: "The New Wave of Stalinist Terror".

\*\*\*\* It is well known that some of the wreckers of yesterday have proved in their work that they have repented, and they have accordingly been amnestied. In particular, Ramzin and a number of his collaborators in wrecking work, whose fate especially deeply alarmed the former Chairman of the Second International, have just recently had all political and civil rights restored to them, as people who have fully repented and have conscientiously fulfilled a number of most important technical tasks. A number of other specialists, at one time wreckers, particularly distinguished themselves during the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal, and were awarded the Order of the Red Banner.

the differentiation in the ranks of Social-Democracy itself is becoming deeper, and an ever larger number of the members of the Social-Democratic Parties are beginning to adopt a negative and indignant attitude towards such statements by their leaders?

No, the organizers of the slanderous campaign in 1936 cannot count on bringing into the campaign even those sections of the workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia who are still under their influence. They have still less grounds for hoping that by their "moral and political intervention" they can force the proletarian dictatorship to alter its policy to any degree whatsoever to suit the miserable remnants of the anti-Soviet parties who live in emigration by grace of the bourgeoisie.

What the organizers of the campaign hope to do is to introduce some confusion into the ranks of the supporters of the united front, to suppress the desires of the working masses for united action, and to conceal their own stubborn sabotage of the proposals of the Communists for joint struggle against the danger of war and fascism.

#### V. KAUTSKY WANTS THE "UNITED FRONT" NOT AGAINST FASCISM BUT AGAINST THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

That the present campaign aims at disrupting the united proletarian front is very convincingly proved by Kautsky's article. The old renegade and falsifier of Marxism enjoys the sorry reputation among working class circles of being a vindictive, blind enemy of the great proletarian revolution, an individual who has more than once openly declared for the violent overthrow of the workers' and peasants' government. The attacks upon the dictatorship of the proletariat repeated in his last article, and his demand that the enemies of the Soviet Union be given freedom to carry on their counter-revolutionary work there are nothing new at all. The only thing that is new is that this time Kautsky *directly links up* these demands for "freedom for everybody" in the Soviet Union, with the struggle against the united front in the capitalist countries.

Kautsky recognizes that there is a desire for unity among the working class today. But he does not like it, and he openly says so. "All the same", he writes, "*I cannot be glad about the present desire to restore the 'united front'.*"

But why is Kautsky displeased about this desire? Because the aim of the united front is to increase the struggle against fascist, and not Bolshevik, dictatorship. Monstrous though it be, Kautsky nevertheless produces this argument, and, what is more, without any sign of embarrassment, and on the pages of the organ of German Social-Democracy.

"In the fascist countries", he writes, "the champions of the united front hope that it will *strengthen the opposition to the dictatorship*. But in Soviet Russia the united front is to have *just the opposite* effect. Here it is to result in the Socialists giving up their opposition. In this way certain Mensheviks hope to earn the good will of the Communist dictatorship, a tolerant attitude to themselves and, finally, liberty."

In his maniacal ravings, Kautsky sees "certain Mensheviks" prepared, in the name of a united struggle against fascism, temporarily to give up the struggle against the Soviet Government. And so he raises



the alarm on that account. If the united front cannot lead to increased opposition against the Soviet Union, then, in Kautsky's opinion, it is harmful, and must be rejected. In that case, *what sort of "united front"* is Kautsky prepared to support? It is clear that he is ready to support joint action with those forces which are conducting a struggle against the Soviet Government, to collaborate with the whiteguards.

We shall see below that the Mensheviks have really on more than one occasion concluded counter-revolutionary blocs of this kind with capitalist and kulak parties at different stages of the great proletarian revolution.

But Kautsky also knows that such a conception against the united proletarian front, in such a pure and unconcealed form, cannot fool the workers. Even the backward sections of the workers, who do not yet understand that true democracy for all the toilers, for all the Soviet people, exists in the Soviet Union, will nevertheless refuse to agree to fight against the Soviet Government. And even less will they, in the interests of this counter-revolutionary struggle, reject the united front against the economic and political offensive of capital and fascism which directly menaces them today, against the intolerable fascist dictatorship, and against the world war which may break out any day.

Therefore, Kautsky adds two *subsidiary arguments* against the united front, to his chief anti-Soviet argument, *viz*: the united proletarian front, he asserts, *is not necessary* for the struggle against the war danger and war; the united proletarian front *is not necessary* for the struggle against the offensive of fascism and the fascist dictatorship:

"The split between the Social-Democrats and Communists," writes Kautsky, "*least of all constitutes a menace to universal peace.*"

If this is so, it is clear that, according to Kautsky, the abolition of this split in the ranks of the working class does not lessen the war danger, and will not make it easier to utilize the revolutionary crisis caused by imperialist war, to overthrow the ruling class of capitalists.

During the world imperialist war, Kautsky, as we know, put forward the theory that the Labor and Socialist International should stop functioning during the war; thus he gave the Social Democratic Parties in each country permission to serve, unrestrictedly, the war interests of "their own" imperialism. Today, on the eve of a new imperialist war he goes further. Now he declares that the Labor International *cannot be an instrument of peace*, that the elimination of the split in the ranks of the working class is not one of the mightiest factors in the struggle for peace. Kautsky's "theory" serves entirely the interests of the fascist governments and the most aggressive circles of the imperialist bourgeoisie in all the countries which are kindling the flames of a new imperialist war.

Do we need the united front for the struggle against fascism? No, says Kautsky, it is not required for that either.

"This also [united working class action]", exclaims Kautsky with irony, "must be the road of Democracy! This road having

been proclaimed, fascism must apparently be crushed everywhere. *But it must still be proved that there is no other road, if they want to establish the united front of the Communist International with the whole of the Labor and Socialist International."*

What other road does Kautsky know besides the united working class front by which to organize the forces of the working class and to rally to them the broadest masses of the toilers, to resist the offensive of fascism, and to overthrow the fascist dictatorship? He does not consider it necessary to disclose his secret. He does not recognize that the fascist danger is a real one. There is *no need to hurry* either with the struggle against the terrorist dictatorship in the countries of fascism. What really cannot be postponed, what cannot be slackened, in Kautsky's opinion, is the struggle against the Soviet government.

The most intimate connections always have existed and still exist between Kautsky and the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks supply Kautsky with material for his interventionist activities; Kautsky, on his part, has blessed, and continues to bless the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries for their counter-revolutionary adventures.

The article entitled "Reflections on the United Front" supplements the Menshevik article entitled "The Liberation of Socialist Ideas." Both these articles leave no doubt about the aim of the present campaign. And none of those who in one form or another, or to one degree or another, take part in this campaign, can have, or will have, the right to claim that he was unable immediately to see the aims and the character of this campaign.

*The campaign is one of the usual maneuvers adopted by the reactionary wing of Social-Democracy to smash the united front.*

#### VI. THE MENSHEVIKS AT THE BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC STAGE OF REVOLUTION

Let us examine the arguments usually put forward by the defenders of the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., in their attempts to obtain freedom for anti-Soviet action in the Soviet Union. In this article we shall dwell upon one of the most widespread sophisms, based upon the appeal to the allegedly revolutionary past of these parties.

The sponsors of the Mensheviks assert that during the October Revolution they disagreed with the Bolsheviks in that they "were trying to set up a united front in Russia, instead of the dictatorship of one party". (Norman Thomas: Speech at a debate with Comrade Browder, November 27, 1935.) The Socialists persecuted in the U.S.S.R., it is alleged, proved "their revolutionary solidarity in practice during the struggle against the Whites". (Zyromski, "Revolutionary Defense and Democratic Liberty", in *Populaire*, February 5, 1936.)

But what do the facts tell us?

It is true that the Mensheviks (and also the Socialist-Revolutionaries) conducted a struggle against the autocracy, were persecuted, and served terms of punishment in tsarist prisons and in exile. But in their fight against tsarism they made their starting point the view that the revolution in Russia could not go beyond the confines of the bourgeois

revolution, while in their opinion, *only the bourgeoisie* could lead the bourgeois revolution.

And so they tried to persuade the working class that it was not their historic task to overthrow the Tsar by an alliance with the peasantry and, isolating the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, but to urge the bourgeoisie gradually into the struggle against the Tsar and the landlords.

At the first stage of the revolution, 1903 to February, 1917, the Mensheviks behaved as revolutionaries in the struggle against the Tsar, but as *petty-bourgeois revolutionaries*, who lag behind the bourgeoisie. This was the difference in principle between their position and the position of the *proletarian revolutionaries*, the Bolsheviks. The struggle of principle on questions of program and tactics, which went on between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, did not cease during the whole of this period. Nevertheless, at that time the Bolsheviks were able to set up a *united front* with the Mensheviks (as well as with other petty-bourgeois revolutionaries), and even, for a definite period of time, to be in one united party with the Mensheviks.

Why was this possible? Because, with all their fundamental errors, the Mensheviks declared that they were prepared to fight together with the Bolsheviks against the *immediate common enemy*—tsarist autocracy and the landlords—and for bourgeois-democratic liberties.

During the February (March) revolution, the Mensheviks of all currents (and the Socialist-Revolutionaries as well), despite all their revolutionary phraseology, continued to take as their starting point the view that the bourgeoisie were capable of waging a real struggle against the autocracy. These social-conciliationist parties, in the persons of Chkheidze and Kerensky, implored the bourgeoisie—the Committee of the State Duma—to *take over the leadership* of the movement of workers, soldiers and peasants which had seized the whole of the country, in order to avert the revolutionary storm. While the toiling masses, tortured by the war and thirsting for peace, were brought close to the proletarian revolution, by the very development of events, as the only way out of the war and inevitable catastrophe, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries continued to insist that the victory of socialism in Russia was impossible, and strove to preserve capitalism by “improving” it.

In the circumstances when the proletarian revolution was developing, they fought against the *program of the Bolsheviks*, which demanded the overthrow of the bourgeois power, the transfer of all power to the Soviets, immediate democratic peace, immediate confiscation of the estates of the landlords in favor of the peasantry, the nationalization of factories, works, banks and railways.

For precisely this reason, the workers and the poor peasantry, who in February followed the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, began to pass over to the side of the Bolshevik program. They began to break away from these social-reformist parties and to join the ranks of the political army which the Bolsheviks had created in the course of the struggle and the conflicts between the classes from April to October, 1917.

VII. THE MENSHEVIKS FAVOR A SPLIT AMONG THE WORKERS  
IN THE INTERESTS OF THE BOURGEOISIE

In the Spring of 1917, as everybody is well aware, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had a majority in the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This did not prevent the Bolsheviks from advancing the slogan "All Power to the Soviets", which, *at that stage*, signified the demand that the social-conciliationist parties reject the idea of a bloc with the bourgeoisie (the Constitutional Democrats), that a Soviet government of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries be formed, that the opposition be given the right to free agitation and that all parties should carry on the struggle freely *inside the Soviets*. In putting forward this slogan, the Bolsheviks based themselves upon the view that the free struggle inside the Soviets between themselves and the Mensheviks would lead to the victory of the Bolshevik program of the socialist transformation of the country, over the Menshevik program to save capitalism. The Bolsheviks would then have won the majority in the Soviets and changed the composition of the Soviet Government by way of free development inside the Soviets. This plan did not as yet mean the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it undoubtedly facilitated the preparations for the conditions necessary to ensure that dictatorship.

The Bolsheviks did not consider it permissible to call for the overthrow of the Provisional Government as long as this slogan had not gained a majority in the Soviets. They did their utmost to ensure united working class action in the struggle against the class enemy, and carefully avoided everything that might introduce a split into the struggle.

How did the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries act at this stage? Being parties in favor of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, they stood for *the split* in the ranks of the working class, for the split in revolutionary democracy, headed by the revolutionary proletariat.

Having a majority in the Soviets, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries rejected the slogan "All Power to the Soviets", in the interests of the bourgeoisie and Entente imperialism. During the July Days, for example, instead of conducting a free struggle against the Bolsheviks inside the Soviets, they used the whole apparatus of the government and *all the measures of compulsion* which, in consequence of their bloc with the bourgeoisie, they had at their disposal for the purpose, against the Bolsheviks, and the revolutionary workers and peasants. As a result of the July defeat of the Bolsheviks, the reformist parties—the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—were thrown into the arms of the counter-revolution of the Generals and the Constitutional Democrats.

This Kerensky period, a period of coalition between the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and the bourgeoisie, the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to confiscate the estates of the landlords, their struggle to continue the war "to a victorious conclusion", the June offensive at the front, the application of the death sentence against the soldiers, and the Kornilov uprising—all this decided the fate of the Menshevik-Socialist-Revolutionary program of the de-



fense of capitalism, and decided it in favor of the Bolshevik program of the overthrow of capitalism, the program of the proletarian revolution. The overwhelming majority in the Soviets took the side of the Bolsheviks.

Now the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" began to signify the *transfer* of power to the *Bolsheviks*, the direct advance of the proletarian revolution towards the dictatorship of the proletariat through an uprising against the Kerensky government.

How, at the time of the October Revolution, did the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries reply to this slogan which had now become the slogan of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies? By remaining faithful to their bloc with the bourgeoisie, who took up arms against the Soviets.

#### VIII. "TO ARMS AGAINST THE SOVIETS"

On November 9, when it was clear to all—friends and enemies alike—that the whole of the proletariat, at any rate of Petrograd and Moscow, were on the side of the October Revolution, the Central Committee of the Mensheviks issued a manifesto to the Petrograd workers which stated that:

"And at such a critical moment . . . in this ruined country, in which the working class constitute as yet an insignificant minority of the population . . . the Bolsheviks have thought fit to *undertake their crazy experiment of seizing power, allegedly for the Socialist revolution. Only seekers after adventure or traitors to the revolution could do such a thing.* The working class have taken no direct part in this insane enterprise. . . . A government which relies upon bayonets is doomed to destruction. . . . The defeat of the Bolsheviks is inevitable." (*Rabotchaya Gazeta*, organ of the C.C. of the Mensheviks, Nov. 11, 1917.)

But the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries did not limit themselves to mere words about the inevitable destruction of the Soviet Government. They feverishly *prepared* it.

It is a lie to assert that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries refused to recognize the Soviet Government in consequence of the fact that they wanted to avoid "a fratricidal struggle in the ranks of revolutionary democracy"! That was not the case at all! Striving to regain power for the capitalists and landlords, they threw themselves headlong into a whiteguardist adventure, hoping to set alight an internecine struggle in the ranks of the proletariat. In the resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Mensheviks on November 10, 1917, it says:

"From now onwards until the complete liquidation of the Bolshevik adventure, *no agreement is permissible with the Bolshevik Party concerning the organization of a government* jointly with them. . . . The All-Russian Committee to Save the Fatherland and the Revolution must make the proposal to the Military-Revolutionary Committee that it immediately lay down its arms, give up the power it has seized, and call upon the military units under its influence to subordinate themselves to the authority of the Provisional Government. . . ."

To whose mercy, according to the demand of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, was the already victorious proletarian revolution to surrender? What was the All-Russian Committee to Save the Fatherland and the Revolution? In the manifestoes which it issued during this period, we find the following:

"Do not recognize the authority of the violators! Do not carry out their orders! Stand in defense of the Fatherland and the Revolution!\* *Take up arms and fight against the crazy adventure of the Bolshevik Military Committees!*"\*\*

These were not mere words. The day following the establishment of the Soviet Government in Petrograd, these parties equipped the Krasnov Cossack regiment against it. The Commissar of the first regiment to attack the Soviet capital was Voitinsky, a Menshevik.

#### IX. IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP, DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Before the February revolution, the Mensheviks were petty-bourgeois revolutionaries; after the October Revolution they began rapidly to change into *petty-bourgeois counter-revolutionaries*. During the Civil War they were on the other side of the barricades. Having lost their connections with the masses of workers and poor peasants, the remnants of the Mensheviks began to link themselves up with the counter-revolutionary actions undertaken by the kulaks, to enter into blocs with the supporters of Kolchak and Denikin, and to render service to the Entente.

Was it possible, in such circumstances, even to think of establishing a united front with them? Of course not. *This would have meant a united front with the class enemy.*

During the Menshevik trial in the spring of 1931, the numerous documents were published in the international Communist press, exposing the part played by the Mensheviks in the whiteguard uprisings against the Soviet government, and proving that they had collaborated with governments set up by the imperialists. What could the Mensheviks and their sponsors answer in reply?

They could not refute these facts. They could only make an effort to *belittle their importance*.

In reply to these documents which accused the Menshevik organizations of taking part in the whiteguard government in Archangel, *Le Populaire* wrote:

"You cannot make the Menshevik Party and its leaders responsible for the behavior of a few people who, in 1918, were entirely out of touch with their party center in Moscow."

The *Vorwaerts* at that time published the declaration of the Menshevik center abroad (the so-called delegation), in which it said:

"Individual members of the party or individual groups, who, during the years of civil war and unrest, conducted a policy different from that of the official party, have now left the party or been expelled from it."

\* *Rabotchaya Gazeta*, Issue No. 199.

\*\* From appeal by the All-Russian Committee to Save the Fatherland and the Revolution.

But of what avail are the evasions and attempts to evade responsibility for the heaviest of crimes, as against the indisputable *facts* which the Soviet people know and will never forget, and which the toilers of the whole world should also never forget?

X. THE MENSHEVIKS FAVOR THE "DEMOCRATIC"  
INTERVENTION OF THE ENTENTE!

It is not true that the Mensheviks in Archangel who openly and officially entered into a bloc with the English troops of occupation had no connections with other Mensheviks, and did not know what they were doing. They were *informed* of the fact that the Czech mercenaries of French imperialism, who, in alliance with the whiteguards were out to crush the Soviet government, were also enjoying the support of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

"Siberia, the Urals, the Volga region, have all long ago revolted under the slogan of a united democratic, independent Russia. Now the struggle has begun in the North as well. . . . *Russia needs an alliance with the enemies of Germany, namely, England, France, America and so on.* They are interested in an alliance with the Russia that is being emancipated, and are compelled to offer her assistance."

These are the words of the *Severnny Luch* (Northern Ray), which *officially* called itself the "organ of the Archangel Committee of the Social-Democratic Labor Party", and indicated the regions seized by the Czech legions and the slogans under which they were fighting.

"Siberia, the Urals, the Volga Region . . ." the Archangel Menshevik Committee enumerated these places. And in *all* these regions the Menshevik organizations which at that time displayed any activity at all supported the uprising against the Soviets.

The Archangel Menshevik interventionists met with a response among the Menshevik interventionists in the South of Russia. True, the response was somewhat belated, arriving when the Archangel white-guard government had already been swept away.

"The activities of the Allies on Russian territory are an event of great political importance which can have the most favorable consequence in regenerating our native land."

This is now the *Yuzhny Rabochy*\* (Southern Worker\*) greeted the French occupation troops (on the eve of the arrival in Odessa of the French squadrons). The *Southern Worker* was the organ of the Odessa Committee of the Mensheviks, and the editor was Peter Harvy, the same Harvy who today is the permanent editor of the *Socialistichesky Vestnik* and is the heart and soul of all the slanderous campaigns directed against the Soviet Union.

The leaders of entire Menshevik organizations—regional, provincial, and urban committees, in the regions seized by the whiteguards and occupation troops, defended and pursued the policy of a bloc with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the imperialists. Was this an

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\* Issue dated August 11, 1918, in an article entitled "National Tasks and the Working Class."

accident? Was this a deviation from the official Menshevik policy?

No, this was the Menshevik policy in fact. This policy, as we shall see below, accelerated the exit from the Menshevik Party of the honest elements which had remained in it. Why did the Mensheviks put forward the slogans of the Constitutional Assembly and bourgeois democracy? It was precisely under these slogans, that were directed against the Soviet government in the interests of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, that the Mensheviks led the workers and peasants into bloody, whiteguard terror.

Near Samara, the Socialist-Revolutionaries shot down several hundred workers of the Ivashensk works. Similar bloody reprisals against the workers took place in the Urals. When the action of the workers and soldiers in Kazan against the whiteguard authorities was put down, the Menshevik Committee made the following declaration in one of its proclamations:

“... the authorities have enough forces to destroy traitors, and they have destroyed them.”

#### XI. BLINDED BY HATRED OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

In the Ukraine, the possibility of experiencing the domination of the Hetman and volunteer counter-revolution in 1918 and the beginning of 1919 urged the urban petty-bourgeois masses in the direction of the Soviet government. Nevertheless, when Denikin succeeded in the second half of 1919 in over-running the Ukraine for several months, for the last time, the Menshevik organizations once more failed to resist the temptation of avenging themselves against the Soviet government. The old disgraceful story was repeated. In all the towns where the Denikin troops allowed the Menshevik organizations some breathing space, they collaborated with them in one way or another.

In Kharkov, the Menshevik newspaper, *Nachalo* (“The Beginning”), persuaded the workers that the Denikin government was superior to the Bolshevik “dictatorship” as it was a “democratic” government. Their magazine, *Mysl* (“Thought”), among the leading writers of which were Martov, Dan, and Abramovich, wrote that with the advent of Denikin “Something that appeared to be in the nature of a national holiday had been established”. The new government, wrote the magazine, although it has anti-Socialist aims, can play a revolutionary role in the circumstances we are living through today”.

In Kiev, the Mensheviks took part in the town council appointed by the Denikin Command; they and the trade union bodies under their leadership worked in the closest contact with the employers’ organizations. The Mensheviks made use of the “freedom” and international contacts allowed them by Denikin, to address a manifesto to the workers of the capitalist countries which foully slandered the Soviet government and sought to persuade the international proletariat not to support the latter in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Monstrous though it was, after the experiences of Denikin’s rule, the Menshevik organizations tried similarly to stab the Soviet government and the Red Army in the back on the territory occupied by the whiteguard Poles. Thus, in Zhitomir, after the Pilsudski troops had



occupied the town, the local organization of the Mensheviks published the following in its newspaper, the *Volynskaya Zarya* ("The Volynsk Dawn"):

"We have experienced eight months of *hard slavery*, spiritual and physical [they are referring to the eight months of Soviet government—P.L.] and our common *resurrection* [the arrival of Pilsudski—P.L.], in circumstances of a more or less full life, will be welcomed by our readers as well as by us."

What can the Mensheviks and their sponsors offer against this fact? The resolution of the Moscow C.C. of the Mensheviks, which promised the Soviet government participation in the struggle against Pilsudski? Why, that paper resolution, adopted in circumstances when the European proletariat, irrespective of their political tendencies, took up the defense of the Land of the Soviets against the attacks of Polish imperialism (*e.g.*, councils of action in England), did not, as a matter of principle, stand for the unreserved defense of the Soviet Union against all kinds of intervention.

#### XII. DIFFERENCES AMONG THE MENSHEVIK AUTHORITIES DID NOT AFFECT THE POLICY OF INTERVENTION

It is true that in the civil war years there were some differences of opinion among the Menshevik authorities concerning the question of the *expediency* of relying upon imperialist intervention. Undoubtedly, besides the "activists", *i.e.*, those of the Mensheviks who openly steered a course for the victory of whiteguard counter-revolution and foreign imperialism, there were others who made their starting point the view that the Soviet government would fall even without *intervention*, that its downfall must be accelerated and the Soviet government overthrown, relying upon the forces inside the country. This was the view of the moderate or "Left" Mensheviks.\*

But how are we to explain the fact that among the Menshevik authorities, not only did those who accepted and those who rejected intervention work peacefully side by side, but all their differences of opinion in actual practice were settled *in favor of intervention*? By the fact, firstly, that both wings of Menshevism were striving to *restore capitalism*, to liquidate the Soviet government. And, secondly, by the fact that not a single Menshevik current, including the "Lefts" (Martov), really rejected the tactics of violently overthrowing the Soviet government—for reasons of principle. This disagreement between them was merely a question of the expediency of using these tactics in the existing circumstances, with the existing relation of forces, etc.

Thus, the "denial" advanced by the Menshevik foreign delegation, and published in *Vorwaerts* in 1931, was a lie from beginning to end.

First, not "individual members of the party or individual groups", but entire Menshevik organizations in all the regions seized by the white-

\* The All-Russian Conference of Mensheviks, which in the summer of 1918, passed a resolution proposed by Martov, against appealing to the Entente for assistance, had three months previously expressed their confidence that "the Soviets, during the six months which had passed since the October Revolution, had succeeded in becoming the embodiment of the most intolerable tyranny, in the eyes of the broad masses of the population" . . . and that "among the working class there is a more and more marked desire to be observed to throw off the yoke of the clique that has seized the Soviets".

guards and occupation troops in 1918-1920 pursued a policy of entering into a bloc with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the imperialists.

Second, not a single individual who supported intervention in theory or in practice was *ever expelled* from the Menshevik Party. On the contrary, such honored interventionists as Peter Harvy, the agent of French imperialism, and Kephali, the Denikinist, are now at the head of the Menshevik delegation abroad, and write theses as to how the workers of the Soviet Union and of capitalist countries should behave in the event of an armed attack upon the U.S.S.R.

Third, the interventionists did not "themselves leave the Menshevik Party", but, on the contrary, the interventionist practices of Menshevism *accelerated the flight* from the party of all honest elements who still remained in it.

### XIII. THE FLIGHT OF ALL HONEST MEMBERS FROM THE PARTY OF INTERVENTION

This process of differentiation in the Menshevik organizations on the basis of the refusal, not only of the rank-and-file members, but also of a number of functionaries, to subscribe to the interventionist practices, or even to tolerate them, took on such enormous dimensions in the spring of 1919 that Comrade Lenin specially pointed to the need of making it carefully into account.

The resolution of the Moscow Soviet and the theses of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. adopted in April, 1919, on the proposal of Lenin, during the most serious moment of the Kolchak menace, called for the need of making a differentiated approach toward the Mensheviks.

The resolution of the Moscow Soviet reads:

"... it declares that it is the task of the Soviet government today to carry on a *merciless struggle* [my italics—P.L.] against those Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who, like the *Vsegda Vperod* and *Dielo Naroda* literary and political groups are really hindering our struggle and are the allies of our sworn enemies." (Lenin, Vol. XXIV, p. 221.)

The newspaper *Vsegda Vperod* was the official organ of the Menshevik Party, under the editorship of Martov, Dan and Abramovich; the second, the *Dielo Naroda* was the official organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, under the editorship of Chernov. The resolution emphasizes the fact that official Menshevism "while aligning itself with the Soviet government in words and protesting against the military interference of the Entente . . . is an ally of our sworn enemies".

"But," it states in the theses of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, "*there are people among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who are prepared to offer such assistance* [assistance to the Soviet government in the struggle against Kolchak (my italics—P.L.)]. These people must be encouraged, by giving them practical work, primarily in connection with technical assistance to the Red Army in the rear, a strict check being kept on their work." (Vol. XXIV, p. 226.)

This was the attitude adopted by the Bolsheviks towards the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who honestly took the *first step* towards the Soviet government and were prepared to fight against the whiteguards. They were given confidence *in advance*, as the resolution of the Moscow Soviet demanded. They were encouraged by being afforded work which immediately brought forth positive results in the struggle against the whiteguards, and *drew* them to further work. They were given work *corresponding* to their political level, the degree of firmness they had already achieved, and their revolutionary readiness to fight for the Soviet government. They were *tested* and *educated* on this work.

In the course of the struggle against the whiteguards, and on the basis of the experience of this struggle, those Mensheviks who were inclined towards the Soviets were *further* freed from the influence of their own party. Simultaneously, the double-dealing elements for whom declarations of loyalty were merely a cover for wrecking activities, exposed themselves in the course of the practical struggle.

It was impossible to fight against Kolchak and remain a Menshevik, for the Kolchakists themselves had grown up out of the collaboration against the Soviet government between the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries on the one hand, and bourgeois counter-revolution on the other. The struggle against Kolchak, Denikin, Wrangel, and Pilsudski showed clearly to all who took part in it that support of the Soviet government was absolutely incompatible with Menshevism. And former Mensheviks openly broke away from their party: they fought against it.

The transition of former Mensheviks to the ranks of honest citizens of the Soviet Republic took place chiefly on the basis of the experiences of the civil war. They became members of the family of workers and peasants engaged in building socialist society in the land of the proletarian dictatorship.

Those of the former Mensheviks who sincerely broke away once and for all from the theory and practice of Menshevism, who proved their loyalty to the proletarian revolution, to the Soviet government, and to Communism, became worthy of being taken into the ranks of the Communist Party. They are conducting the line of the Party today as Communists in all branches of Party and Soviet work.

Particularly prominent among them is the name of Comrade Martinov, who, by his loyal, untiring work as a true soldier of the proletarian revolution during the course of the last 12 years of his life, proved worthy of the confidence and respect of the proletariat not only of the Soviet Union but of the capitalist countries.

We know how irreconcilable and staunch in principle Comrade Martinov proved himself as a Communist, in exposing Menshevism and all varieties of it. In his characterization of Menshevism, which stopped at nothing in its struggle against the Soviet government, Comrade Martinov wrote the following in an article on the Menshevik trial in 1931:

"These prostituted people were prepared to hide the foulest dealings behind 'Marxist phraseology'. . . . We have no doubt

that the Social-Democratic workers of the capitalist countries, who have not yet lived down their old, washed-out, Social-Democratic traditions, having become more closely acquainted with the physiognomy of these living Mensheviks who now stand before the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., will turn away from them with disgust, loathing and anger."

#### XIV. THE GEORGIAN INTERVENTIONISTS AND THEIR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTORS

The national Menshevik Parties, the Georgian, Ukrainian and Armenian dashnaks, went still further than the Russian Mensheviks in their struggle against the Soviet government. And not because they were worse than the others. But because the robber hand of imperialists was especially greedily stretched out towards the Caucasus and the Ukraine in consequence of their geographical situation and natural riches, and the working class and the poorest peasants in these countries could not immediately organize their forces and offer real resistance to the foreign robbers and their agents.

After the victory of the October Revolution in Russia, Georgia experienced almost three years of the rule of the Menshevik nationalists. The government of the Georgian Mensheviks, like the Ukrainian Rada, in which the Ukrainian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had seats, invited German troops to enter the country. For what purpose? To "defend the borders of the Georgian Democratic Republic", was the official declaration of the Menshevik government. But revolution broke out in Germany, and "independent Georgia" could not hold out without imperialist sponsors. And the place of the German troops who departed was taken by British occupation troops. And the Mensheviks accepted their help as well. Why? To maintain power against the will of the toilers.

Noy Jordania, an old Menshevik and head of the government, formulated the essence of the interventionist policy not only of the Georgian, but of all Mensheviks, when, from the platform of the Georgian Constituent Assembly, he declared:

"I know that our enemies will say that we are on the side of imperialism. Therefore I must say quite definitely here that *I prefer the imperialists of the West to the fanatics of the East.*"

But the Georgian "Socialist" Republic was the object not only of the special care of the imperialists, but of the special love of a number of former, aye and present, leaders of the Second International. During the period of Menshevik rule in Georgia, Kautsky, Macdonald, Snowden, Vandervelde and others visited the country.

How did the toiling masses live in this "Socialist" paradise? The oppression of the bourgeoisie, the princes, the nobility, the landlords was not abated. The working class and the toiling masses of the peasantry were doomed as before to heavy suffering and exploitation. The Georgian Mensheviks used fire and sword to suppress the revolutionary activities of the workers and peasants.

Backed up by foreign bayonets, the Georgian Mensheviks, together



with the Armenian Dashnaks, converted the Trans-Caucasus into a jumping-off ground for foreign intervention and the bourgeois white-guard counter-revolution against the Soviet government.

But the toilers of Georgia, despite all the different forms of assistance afforded to the Menshevik government, succeeded in freeing themselves from it. Supported by the Russian proletariat and the Workers' and Peasants' Army, the Georgian people, 15 years ago, overthrew the rule of the Mensheviks and set up a Soviet government. Did the Georgian Mensheviks capitulate, even after that? No. Driven abroad, the remnants formed a "Georgian government abroad". It is kept by Deterding and other arch-enemies of the working class, and is fed by them as a body provoking a new counter-revolutionary war.

In 1929, eight years after the establishment of Soviet Georgia, I. Tseretelli, the *representative of the Georgian Menshevik Party* in the E.C. of the Second International, made a public declaration exposing the leaders of his party, accusing them once more of preparing an uprising in Soviet Georgia with the support of the bayonets of the imperialists.

"The Georgian people are being persuaded," wrote Tseretelli, "that the possibility of an imperialist, world conflict offers favorable prospects for their emancipation. If war breaks out, Georgia may be driven to rise at the call of and 'with the permission' of its government abroad."\*

Tseretelli sounded the alarm about the interventionist adventure being prepared by the C.C. of the Georgian Mensheviks. And yet Tseretelli himself is not too timid to fight against the proletarian revolution. As a member of the Kerensky government he showed that he was not very particular about the means to be used when it was a question of fighting against the Bolsheviks.

Did Tseretelli's exposure force the Georgian Mensheviks to *give up* their hopes of an imperialist war against the Soviet Union? Were the *international* friends and sponsors of the Georgian interventionists at all embarrassed? Not at all. Tseretelli's exposure resulted in his being recalled from the E.C. of the Second International by the Georgian Mensheviks and being *replaced* there by an *open* supporter of intervention, Gvardajaladze.

As far as we know, the E.C. of the Second International did not object to this "substitution".

#### CONCLUSION

These are the irrefutable, historical facts which characterize the role of the Menshevik Party during the civil war. The Menshevik organizations fought side by side with the whiteguards and imperialists against the Soviet government. Individual Mensheviks came over to the side of the Soviet government and took part in the struggle against the whiteguards only insofar as they left the Menshevik Party, broke off

\* Tseretelli: "The Fundamental Questions of Our Tactics." Quotation taken from the official report of the Secretariat of the Labor and Socialist International, Fourth Congress, Zurich, 1932, pp. 259-260.

all connections with it and fought against it. To assert that the Mensheviks "proved their revolutionary solidarity in actual practice in the struggle against the Whites", is sheer distortion of historical facts, and mockery of the revolution.

No, by their practical policy during the civil war, the Russian Menshevik Party and the national Menshevik Parties proved the contrary: they proved their actual solidarity with the Whites and with world imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution.



ERNST THAELMANN

# The Fiftieth Birthday of Ernst Thaelmann

DEAR COMRADE THAELMANN:

On your fiftieth birthday, the Executive Committee of the Communist International sends to you, the imprisoned leader of the struggle for liberation of the German proletariat, its warmest fighting greetings.

This day, full of honor for you, once again gives us the opportunity to express the closest solidarity of the Communist International with you, with the heroic Communist Party of Germany, and with all the anti-fascist fighters of Germany, a solidarity which no prison bars can break.

In your person, the international proletariat greets the best and the truest representative of the German people, which, by its work and energy, has created Germany's great material values and lofty spiritual culture, but which is now held in chains and bondage by its worst exploiters.

Your whole life was, from earliest youth, dedicated to the struggle of the German working class for liberation from capitalist exploitation. Your path—your steady rise from a simple dock-worker to the recognized leader of the German proletariat who is honored by millions—is a path full of honor, of which the German working class and the international proletariat can be proud.

How many years have you fought to rally the German working class under the banner of true, unadulterated Marxism!

Since Hitler's bloody fascism raised its head, you have repeatedly called on the organizations of the Social-Democratic workers with a mighty voice to united action with the Communist Party, and all the workers and all the toilers of Germany, irrespective of Party, to determined common struggle against the threatening fascist danger.

The idea of proletarian unity in action against fascism had already won firm ground in the ranks of the German working class movement on the very eve of the establishment of the Hitler dictatorship, at the time of the fascist provocative burning of the Reichstag. But at the decisive hour, when the German working class needed strong leadership more than ever before, their best and most reliable leader was torn from his post through your imprisonment.

This blow of the class enemy, which tore you from your direct role as a leader, could not, however, break the steel strength of your revolutionary courage. On the prison front, which in Germany has now become an important sector of the proletarian class struggle, you have been conducting for three years a continuous heroic struggle which fills the broadest masses with great enthusiasm, both in Germany and in other countries.

Your fiery revolutionary spirit, even when enclosed in a prison cell,



acts as a vital source of fighting power for the German proletariat and the international proletariat.

Thousands of fighters for liberty have been tortured to death or treacherously murdered by the fascist cutthroats in Germany. They have long had designs on your life, the life of our dear friend, but the fascist potentates well know how closely and indissolubly you are bound up with the vast masses of the working people of Germany and the international proletariat, being flesh of their flesh and blood of their blood.

They have not even dared to bring you up for trial and put you in the prisoner's dock. They know well that though they have closed your mouth, your mighty voice sounds louder than ever. They fear you, Ernst Thaelmann, because they fear the class of which you are a leader. Ruling fascism feels insecure before the ever-growing profound hatred of millions of German people. That is why the present fascist rulers of Germany, despite their rage and brutality, play such a pitiful role before your greatness as a sublime revolutionary prisoner.

Fascist hopes of destroying Marxism by arresting the leader of the Communist Party of Germany and by the bestialities committed in concentration camps against numerous Communists, Social-Democrats and other anti-fascists have come to naught.

Ever new forces, new heroes in the struggle for liberty, enter the ranks of active fighter and continuously fill the branches made in the front.

The Communist Party and the whole working class of Germany are hard hit by the barbarous and continual fascist persecutions, but the fighting force of the vanguard of the proletariat at the same time is strengthened and steeled. It is a hard school but a school of future victors.

This consciousness will lighten your hard struggle, Comrade Thaelmann.

You, the true internationalist and champion of fraternity of peoples, we know, are filled with indignation at seeing how the fascist rulers of Germany are striving to thrust the German people, whom they have subjected to their reign of terror, into a criminal war against neighboring peoples and against the Soviet Union, the country of socialism.

You, yourself, already in 1932, warned the working class of Germany and France of this danger, when you made that burning speech in Paris, on the fifteenth anniversary of the great October Revolution with the ringing call:

**"Proletarians of Germany and France: Unite!"**

You can be sure that the Communist International will know neither peace nor rest until the proletarians of the entire world are united for a victorious struggle against the fascist instigators of war.

You who love the great Socialist Soviet country so deeply and ardently as a strong fortress in the fight for the emancipation of the international proletariat and rampart of world peace, you have often had—and will have still more—occasion to rejoice in the tremendous victories of the Soviet proletariat, which they won and will win under the leadership of the great Stalin.

You, our friend, who is reckoned among the best leaders of the Communist International, you know that you do not stand alone, that millions of working people are fighting with you in all countries of the world.

No prison wall can prevent this. And the fight for your release becomes in a growing degree the integral part of the international workers' movement, a symbol of the struggle of all exploited people against fascism and war.

You should know that the realization of unity of action of the working class on a national and international scale, the establishment of the widest anti-fascist front, are advancing with firm step.

The advance of the anti-fascist People's Front of France and Spain is the best proof of this. Similar proof is also the constant growth of the united front movement throughout the entire world, despite all obstacles.

The vast militant army fighting for peace, freedom and socialism is growing. Fascism will be defeated. Fascists are but the transient rulers. The great cause to which you have consecrated your life will conquer and triumph.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL  
GEORGE DIMITROFF, *General Secretary*

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## The Eightieth Birthday of Tom Mann

WE ARE glad that not only in England, South Africa and Australia, not only throughout the British Empire but in all countries throughout the world, millions of toilers pronounce the name of Tom Mann with love, a name which is the symbol of single-minded devotion to the cause of working class struggle for national and international unity of the trade union movement and the cause of socialism.

You can with great satisfaction today look upon the realization of your fondest hopes—the victory of socialism which is triumphant on one-sixth of the globe.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL  
GEORGE DIMITROFF, *General Secretary*



ANTONIO GRAMSCI

# Heroes of the Anti-Fascist Struggle in Italy

By GIUSEPPE AMORETTI

SIXTEEN years have passed since various participants of the revolutionary movement of those days, led by the ever profoundly intent Antonio Gramsci, gathered together in a little room in the Cooperative House in Turin, where the daily newspaper of the Turin proletariat was being printed, amidst the rumbling of machinery and the noisy cries of a hundred workers. The best elements of the toiling masses of Italy rallied around Gramsci, whom they saw as their teacher and leader. At the table where keen political articles were written for the *Ordine Nuovo*, which, like poisoned arrows, struck the bourgeoisie and the treacherous trade union officials who subsequently went over to fascism, the departmental representative of the factory committee took his turn with the young intellectual still not sure of the road he ought to choose; the political leader of the Party organization rubbed shoulders with the young inexperienced Party member from the countryside; the Marxist enthusiast, the reader of the first translated works of Lenin, sometimes found himself side by side with a young legionary from the *'Annunzio* detachments, whom the empty rhetoric of the fascist poet had disgusted. Thus it was that our best Party cadres passed through the *Ordine Nuovo*, which linked together Gramsci, Ercoli, Terracini and others in the hard everyday work of creating the Italian Communist Party.

Gramsci was a talented agitator and political leader, and could talk with anybody. All were attracted by the simplicity and originality of his speeches, and the conviction of his arguments. He was extremely cultured, possessed great political acumen, and knowledge of the masses, and an ability to approach the masses and lead them.

Gramsci had the great intellectual force which is combined with tremendous revolutionary passion and unfailing revolutionary will.

Gramsci arrived in the big industrial town of Turin from one of the most backward Italian provinces. And although he first became acquainted with Marxism among intellectuals, he finally came to Marxism only through a profound study of the experiences of the working class movement in Italy. At that time Gramsci was already the embodiment of all that was most advanced in Italy. This extraordinary man was shaped as a result of constant study and of his struggle for the cause of revolution. While still very young, Gramsci was the editor of the newspaper known as *The Cry of the People*. After the war he edited the newspaper *Forward*. Together with a group of his comrades, Ercoli, Terracini and others, Gramsci founded the theoretical magazine, *Ordine Nuovo*, and later the mass daily newspaper of the same name. This *Ordine Nuovo* group was at that time, even before the formation of the Italian Communist Party, closest to the Bolsheviks.



Gramsci was the first in Italy to make a profound study of the great proletarian revolution in Russia and the works of its leaders, Lenin and Stalin, and fought to apply the lessons of the socialist October Revolution to actual life in Italy. In his conversations with workers, even the most backward, Gramsci taught and at the same time learned himself. Through these workers he found out the moods and requirements of the masses, and at the same time cured the workers of all belief in outward appearances, of all narrow, sectarian ideas, thus helping them to grow ideologically and politically. A few years ago Comrade Ercoli wrote:

"Among the leaders of our Party who have come from non-proletarian circles many possess an ability to speak with the masses. But very few, perhaps only one of us—Gramsci—knows how to talk with the worker individually, simply, not like a teacher, not like a 'leader', but like a comrade, I would even say, like a pupil . . . collaborating with the workers, in order, together with him, to find the road open to his class, to test the correctness of this or that line, of this or that slogan. And these precisely are the signs, first and foremost, which make us recognize in him the leader of the working class, able to express, to give form to the thoughts, the longings and needs of the whole class—a leader capable of finding that slogan in the depths of the consciousness of the masses, which exactly corresponds to what the masses as a whole know, want and can achieve, at the given moment."

Thus it was that Gramsci, together with Ercoli, worked stubbornly to create the Party and its cadres. These cadres soon had to undergo serious revolutionary trials, then to experience police reaction and the prohibition of the Party, to suffer long terms of imprisonment, to carry on illegal work in the difficult underground conditions of fascism, and to overcome the difficulties of mass work. We call to mind how Gramsci used to come night and day to the factories that had been seized by the workers. It was as though the proletariat, armed with rifles and machine-guns, had seized the town in an iron ring; they vigilantly guarded the factories confiscated from the capitalists, while continuing to work at full speed. This was the moment when, in the center of the town, the royal guards carefully searched the streets in anticipation of an advance by the workers. The opportunist bureaucrats who led the trade union, cooperative and other mass organizations, conducted secret negotiations with the government in order to find some compromise solution, while many revolutionaries foamed at the mouth as they quarreled about the project to set up Soviets, not noticing that the Soviets had already sprung up and were on the verge of being destroyed.

In 1923-25, when our Party had not yet recovered from the cruel blows of reaction, and had no correct political line, when it had not yet freed itself from the heavy burden of Bordigism and was in a state of great disorganization, Gramsci and Ercoli, with the support now not only of the old *Ordine Nuovo* group, but of all the best Party comrades, Terracini, Scoccimarro, Grieco, and many others, set about their great creative work of Bolshevizing the Party. Gramsci conducted an energetic struggle against Bordiga, then leading the still young Party and the

theoretician of "the pure, courageous minority" who ended in the camp of the Trotskyist counter-revolution. It is the merit of Gramsci and Togliatti that in their struggle against Brodiga, they consolidated the ranks of the Communist Party, trained its cadres and led the Party along the road of the Communist International. The financial magnates, the big factory owners, and their bloody agents, the fascists, did their utmost to hamper the struggle of Gramsci and his comrades-in-arms to emancipate the masses from the fascist yoke. Fascism declared the Communist Party illegal, and in November, 1926, arrested Gramsci, the heroic organizer of our Party. The fascists cast Gramsci into the Ucci di Bari prison for many years, and only as a result of the pressure of the toiling masses later substituted his prison confinement for exile in a prison hospital. Gramsci is now isolated from the Party: he is seriously ill in consequence of the sufferings he has experienced during his long self-sacrificing struggle, but he remains as formerly, one of the most beloved leaders of the Italian proletariat, for he is the embodiment of the struggle of the Italian proletariat for their emancipation.

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Umberto Terracini, one of the youngest (in years) of the organizers of the *Ordine Nuovo* group, is one of the most popular agitators and propagandists of this group among the Turin workers, among the Italian working youth. During the Bologna Congress of the Italian Socialist Party in 1919, Terracini, as representative of the Left wing, was elected to the Central Committee, where he continued to fight untiringly for the carrying out of the line of the Comintern, for the creation of the Communist Party of Italy. From the moment when the Communist Party was formed, until his arrest in 1925, Terracini was permanent member of the Central Committee of the Political Bureau of the Italian Communist Party.

During the early years of the existence of the Communist Party, Terracini went over to the platform of Bordigism, but, influenced by the criticism leveled by Lenin at the Third Congress of the Comintern, he quickly overcame his wavering, and then, together with Gramsci and Togliatti, conducted the struggle against Bordigism and to Bolshevize the Communist Party. Right up to his arrest, Terracini untiringly fought to convert the Party into a mass Communist Party of the Italian proletariat, to establish a broad anti-fascist front. During this period, Terracini particularly distinguished himself in the trade union movement and in the leadership of *Unità*, the central organ of the Party.

The name of Umberto Terracini is closely connected with the trial of Gramsci. Terracini spoke before the special tribunal as the open, bold defender of our Party during the trial of the leaders of the Party. He rested at the time when the Party had not yet been declared illegal, and Terracini was condemned, along with Gramsci, Scoccimarro, Togliatti, Bibolotti, and many other comrades, to a long term of imprisonment, amounting to almost 23 years. In spite of the conspiracy of silence which surrounded the trial of Gramsci, the speech delivered by Terracini before the court filled entirely with policemen was carried through the thick walls of the court to the masses and became fixed

firmly in the ranks of the most advanced sections of the toilers. Terracini's speech exposed the real physiognomy of the totalitarian state, which had arisen then for the first time, armed to the teeth, recognizing that its only danger was from the Communist Party, the best people of which had already been killed or arrested, the Party indissolubly connected with the toiling masses, for whose sake it exists, and for whose cause it is fighting. And it is no accident that the hatred of the fascist hangmen is particularly concentrated upon Comrade Terracini, who is kept in prison. In spite of the fact that he is extremely exhausted as a result of the prison regime in the Santo Stefano prison—he has been in solitary confinement and has frequently been subjected to an especially strict regime in consequence of his tireless work inside the prison itself—our Comrade Umberto has been able to preserve his former unshakable spirit, town will and energy. As such we met him in prison, where he is patiently working on the political education of the young comrades imprisoned, giving himself wholly to the Party, in spite of his low state of health.

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With very few exceptions, all the old leading Party members who came at that time before the special tribunal suffered the same fate as Gramsci and Terracini. In consequence of our lack of experience during the early days of fascist domination, the heroism of many of our comrades was not displayed in extensive mass work, but was expressed in resistance to the police in their behavior before the special tribunal. Our comrades courageously suffered persecution and torture, and always tried to show their hatred towards the class enemy. The only thing which we can say at the door of this phalanx of faithful Party comrades is that during the early days they had more enthusiasm than wisdom, persistence, their fighting spirit was greater than their political training and the Leninist method of working. The Party and the masses were not always aware of the sufferings and the struggle of the revolutionaries confined in prison; many episodes of the life in prison never reached them. Let us relate some of these episodes, and speak about the numerous modest courageous heroes of the anti-fascist struggle in Italy.

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The comrades were incarcerated in the big Rome prison awaiting trial, and there was an atmosphere of open, unrestrained good spirits. Despite the prison discipline, every revolutionary holiday, especially the anniversary of the great proletarian revolution of 1917, was commemorated by meetings and demonstrations. When exercising in the prison yard, they would shout "Long live the Communist!" "Long live the Soviet Union!" Every evening the prison was brought a fresh group of condemned comrades from the enormous court situated on the banks of the Tiber. Those who were acquitted by the court always arrived with bowed heads, depressed, almost crying with anger because they had been acquitted against their will and contrary to their desire. Those who received long-term sentences, were filled with joy and looked contempt-



UMBERTO TERRACINI



uously at the prison warders! This was a peculiar kind of sectarian heroism, against which at that time already Gramsci, Terracini and other leaders of the Party, and especially Comrade Scoccimarro, who was in the same prison, warned our comrades. Only gradually, very slowly, were we successful in changing this attitude. The realization that everything has to be done in the interests of the Party and the toiling masses, that our cadres must not be wasted in vain, that events must be looked at soberly, that we must learn how to defend ourselves by attacking, but to act so that the masses will understand our behavior and support us—this realization gradually began to make headway.

After the trial, comrades condemned to long years of imprisonment were put in solitary confinement for a definite term. This was a most difficult period of isolation: a hungry existence, solitude, and by way of "spiritual" food—fascist or Catholic books and magazines. But there is no brutality or fascist torture that can break the steadfastness of our comrades. When their term of solitary confinement had expired, these comrades—the majority of whom are rank-and-file members of the lower organizations, almost all workers whose families were doomed to starvation—were sent to places of collective confinement, they took food only once a day, so as to save a few pence to buy, more or less secretly, Marx's *Capital*, the only one of our books which was on sale. It was their dream during the long months of voluntary starvation to acquire a copy of *Capital*. The receipt of the book caused them feverish enjoyment, they stroked its pages and carefully put paper covers on the outside to protect it. And then they began to read it—and they read it over and over again.

It was a great event when Stalin's book *Problems of Leninism* was received in prison. This book armed us with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, equipped us with a knowledge of the strategy, tactics and organizational principles of Bolshevism. In prison, moreover, we learned that it is necessary to combine the theoretical fundamentals of the teachings of Lenin and Stalin with revolutionary enthusiasm. During the course of one year, the entire group of comrades armed themselves with the knowledge and will to fight and conquer.

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The fighting spirit among the constantly changing mass of political prisoners grows, their political training improves, their firm will to conquer grows stronger. New prisoners arrive with fresh experience, the old ones leave promising to renew the struggle, while those who have already served terms of imprisonment return again, enriched with new experiences, and having gathered strength in their work. Those who have sat in the prison cells will never forget these departures and returns. Among the prisoners there is one comrade from the province of Ferrar, suffering from tuberculosis—he has six children and a sick wife, and the whole family are in dire need. He has come up before the special tribunal for the third time. The first time he was given two years, the second time four years, and the third time sixteen years.

There are the "nomads", who leave only to return again. But there



M. ERCOLI

are those who never leave and have been waiting for release for ten, twelve, fifteen years. These are the old comrades, the members of the *arditi del popolo* (people's shock-brigaders), who fought against the fascists and the armed guards of Blackshirts in 1920-22. Today they still live on the memory of past battles. The struggle then was long and ferocious; in it thousands of workers and peasants perished. In every town there were those of our Party who fell in action, *the heroes of those armed battles*; and the names of many of them remained unknown. How many had their heads broken open by the thugs of the landowners on the banks of the canal! How many were dragged out of their beds before the eyes of their horrified wives and mothers, and shot far up in the mountains! The old, condemned comrades constantly call to mind such heroes of the armed battles as Lavagnini, Berruti and Berci.

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Imprisoned proletarian Communist women have also written many glorious pages in the history of the struggle of our Party. In the prisons of Perugia and Trani, Party women condemned to many years of imprisonment and who constitute a much smaller percentage than the male political prisoners (the discipline in the women's prisons is much more strict) have nevertheless displayed great steadfastness and courage. Old Party leaders, leading active women, class-conscious proletarian women have all—during the long years of confinement in prison—displayed the same courage and self-sacrifice as distinguished them during their Party work and, after their arrest, in the court. Our dear Comrade Adele Bei, before the special tribunal, behaved in a manner worthy of a real Communist, and was an example of courage. Here are some extracts from the dialogue which took place between the President of the Tribunal and Adele Bei:

*"President:* Why did you return to Italy; what were your aims in Italy?"

*"Adele Bei:* Those which a member of the Communist Party should have, *i.e.*, to be at the head of the workers and toilers in their everyday struggle.

*"President:* And in doing so, you did not think that you were violating your duties as a mother, because you neglected your children?

*"Adele Bei:* By trying to help the proletarian struggle against fascism, by giving my experience as a revolutionary and Communist, I was doing my duty as a mother as well, because my Party is striving, through the proletarian revolution, to improve the living conditions of the toilers, to secure a joyful life for proletarian children, who are now dying of hunger."

The whole session consisted of a duel between the president and the accused. Adele Bei's concluding words so filled the tribunal with indignation that she was deprived of the right to make a statement and was sentenced to eighteen years' imprisonment. However, Adele Bei's speech met with a wide response from the people. She said:

"I have always known and still know that the work of the Communists is not directed against the toilers, but against those

who exploit them. I have always known and still know that my activities help to bring about the destruction of the regime of oppression and starvation, to which fascism has subjected the workers, the peasants, and all the toilers."

Communists who can fight like this can also courageously face death. One day a dying comrade was brought into the hospital. He knew that not far from the hospital was a big cell of political prisoners and he sent them a note. He wrote in this note that, feeling that his militant life was nearing its end, he was satisfied and proud that he had fulfilled his duty. He called upon the comrades to continue along the hard, common road of struggle, for victory is inevitable!

The Italian Communist Party knows tens and hundreds of its members who courageously, without any fear, have marched forth to be shot, or to the gallows.

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While some comrades are engaged in active mass work, others conduct work which is more modest, but which is also fraught with big difficulties and dangers. We call to mind the tragic episode connected with the anti-war congress in Brussels. The Italian delegates made their way to this congress secretly, illegally, crossing the frontier over the Alps. But the congress did not receive one of the delegates. . . . The old leader of the Young Communist organization, Bacci—who had served a term of imprisonment and suffered from tuberculosis—was frozen to death in the Alpine glaciers. This historic congress will remain indissolubly connected with the name of Comrade Bacci.

Our well-known Comrade Camillo Montanari perished in another way; he was killed by the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists who follow in the footsteps of the fascists. Our Comrade Montanari was very much loved in the Party for the great demands he always made upon himself and upon others. An old member of the Party, he had been working for many years in the Party apparatus. Simple, extremely hard-working, very capable, he gave every moment of his life to the Party. And he demanded the same thing from everybody. He defended the Party against all enemies inside the Party, against double-dealing Trotskyists, against all who tried to use the Party for their own personal ends, and against those whom the Party from time to time exposed and threw out of its ranks. These enemies of the Party have no intention of laying down their arms; they organize into an armed band, in order to attack the loyal sons of the Party. And it is clear that the hatred of this band of Trotskyist traitors was especially strong against the one who was always fighting for the purity of the Party line.

A few hours before his death from the bullet of a Trotskyist scoundrel, in the darkness of the underground Paris metropolitan railway, Montanari said to us: "My wife and child are waiting for me at home, but I want to see X, because I have not yet settled a question with him." A few hours later death at the hands of a counter-revolutionary Trotskyist overtook him.

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The iron cadres of the Italian Communist Party, examples of whom we have in our comrades and leaders Gramsci and Terracini, are being forged in a stubborn, self-sacrificing struggle, and at the cost of countless sacrifices. By their example of heroic struggle against the exploiters and oppressors of the Italian people, the cadres of our Party are being educated in the spirit of self-sacrificing loyalty to the working class cause, to the cause of Communism. Under the leadership of these cadres, the proletariat and the toiling masses will advance to the storming of fascism, to the decisive struggle, to victory.

## Romain Rolland

**R**OMAIN ROLLAND, the great writer, fighter, thinker, friend of toiling mankind, enjoys the most profound love of the masses of the people throughout the world. Millions of toilers took part in the celebrations on the recent occasion of his seventieth birthday.

"I am happy to be in one great army with you," writes Romain Rolland to Comrade Dimitroff. All the best elements of mankind, all real supporters of progress, all really honest people who do not want to reconcile themselves to the barbarity of decaying capitalism, are coming over to the side of the army of the revolutionary proletariat. The working class of the world already count quite a few allies among the best brains of the intellectuals. One of the oldest and most faithful of the creatively thinking allies of the proletariat, inspired artist of the written word and fiery publicist, who has given half a century of his tireless and rich life to the struggle for a better future for mankind, is Romain Rolland.

The world proletariat remember how in the heat of the imperialist war of 1914-18, Romain Rolland was one of the first and one of the few among the intellectuals who was not afraid to raise a fearless voice in protest against the rapacious war. Over all the post-war years, Romain Rolland never ceased to sound the alarm, exposing the intrigues of the imperialists, uttering warnings as to the danger of a new war, rallying together the active friends of peace, helping honest pacifists to achieve the clarity of their views, without which it is impossible to fight consistently against the instigators of war. A burning, never to be soothed, hatred of exploitation and oppression brought Romain Rolland in the course of the struggle into the camp of the enemies of the capitalist system, which is based upon exploitation and engenders war.

For many years he has been waging an irreconcilable struggle with unflinching fury, against fascism, which is striving to drown mankind in blood, against terror, wars and militant obscurantism. In 1926, he was one of the first European intellectuals to raise his voice with a merciless indictment against Italian fascism. In the days when the Japanese fascist militarists began to seize Manchuria, his cry of "Stop the Murderers"! resounded throughout the whole world. In the days when German fascism, by its feverish armaments, put the question of war on the order of the day in Europe, Romain Rolland called upon the people to undertake the struggle against German fascism, a struggle which is at the same time the fight for peace, under the slogan, "Peace or Death to Hitlerism". Dispersing the misunderstanding of his pacifist friends, who sometimes in the name of an abstract love of peace do not want real barriers to be placed in the way of the fascist aggressor, Romain Rolland called for the setting up of a front of all those countries which for different reasons are interested in maintaining peace: "Countries of Europe, let us join hands and form a ring! A ring of peace! And woe to him who encroaches upon it!" wrote Romain Rol-

land in his recent article, "For the Indivisibility of Peace".

Over all his many years of active struggle to unite in one mighty torrent of active hatred all the scattered efforts of all the opponents of war and fascism, to whatever camp they may have belonged, Romain Rolland has been one of the ideological founders of the anti-fascist people's front. Together with Henri Barbusse, he convened the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress, which laid the foundation of a mighty movement of the masses against war and fascism. This movement, which has been led up to now by Romain Rolland with a youthful enthusiasm for all his seventy years, paved the way for the people's front, which has now won a victory in France, Spain and a number of other countries.

In spite of his serious illness, Romain Rolland in his seventy-first year continues, with inexhaustible energy, his many-sided ardent activities as a writer, social worker and politician. Quite recently, he, an old friend of the Soviet Union, tried in many battles, visited for the first time the country where his dreams of a free and just order of society are coming true. On leaving the U.S.S.R., he wrote the following words to Comrade Stalin:

"The only real world progress is indissolubly linked up with the fate of the U.S.S.R. . . . The U.S.S.R. is the flaming heart of the proletarian international which the whole of mankind must and will become."

For the broad masses of the people, the name of Romain Rolland is the banner of the anti-fascist people's front, the banner of struggle for peace and liberty. The revolutionary workers of all countries offer warm greetings to their comrade-in arms and friend, whose high conscience and clear brain have put him in the front ranks of the fighters for the great proletarian cause of liberating mankind.

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## TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

On the occasion of your seventieth birthday, I send my best wishes to you, world famous writer and artist, true friend of the Soviet Union and of the toilers throughout the world, tireless fighter against war, against fascism and reaction, and indomitable defender of the victims of capitalist oppression and slavery, whose great name is pronounced with love and hope by Thaelmann, Ossietzky and Ludwig Renn, Gramsci and Terracini, Rakosi, Antikainen and Itsikawa, who are languishing in fascist dungeons—and thousands of other prisoners of fascism and reaction in the countries of capital.

I myself always remember, with a feeling of profound gratitude, the powerful influence which your noble voice, raised in defense of the accused Communists at the Leipzig Trial, had upon saving my own life from the hands of the German fascist butchers.

I warmly shake your hand, dear friend, and from the bottom of my heart, wish you the best of health, good spirits, and strength in your further creative work, and in your courageous struggle in the front

ranks against the dark forces of reaction, fascism and war—for liberty, peace, culture, and the bright ideals of socialism.

G. DIMITROFF

\* \* \*

Villeneuve (Vand), Villa Olga,  
February 8, 1936.

Dear Comrade Dimitroff:

Few of the congratulations I have received have been of such value to me as yours. For your works are not books, but deeds; and they have been written down in history; they constitute a part of the epopee of revolution.

I am happy to be in one great army with you. When, from the heights of my seventy years, I look back over the road that stretches behind me, I am astounded at the immense distance over which humanity has passed during this period. It has not been without its difficulties and suffering. But none of these have been in vain. And whatever suffering may yet confront us in the near future, we are sure that it will be redeemed by the victory of the great cause which we are serving. For reason is fighting on our side. Such is the law of human development. It can be delayed, but not halted.

Let us congratulate ourselves, then, that in spite of the dangers that threaten us, we are living in such a powerful and fruitful epoch!

I should like the unprecedented awakening that is taking place in the U.S.S.R. to meet with a similar awakening in the West. For a year or two I have been joyfully observing the beginnings of it in France. I am only sorry that the bad state of my health prevents me from taking an active part in it. But my voice is engaged in the struggle, and will, I hope, continue to do so after my death. Whether I am alive or dead, my name will serve as a banner among other banners.

I sincerely shake your hand, dear Comrade Dimitroff.

ROMAIN ROLLAND



## Luis Carlos Prestes, Hero of the Brazilian People

**T**HE BUTCHERS of the Brazilian people have thrown into prison one of the best people in Brazil, Luis Carlos Prestes, national hero covered with legendary glory, indefatigable fighter for the national liberation of Brazil.

Cruel punishment menaces Prestes.

The bourgeois-feudal clique in power in Brazil is striving to settle accounts with the man whose name has become the symbol of the innermost longings and hopes of the people of Brazil, groaning under the yoke of imperialism.

Prestes is the embodiment of the iron will of the Brazilian workers, peasants, farm laborers, handicraftsmen, radically inclined intellectuals, the overwhelming majority of the masses in Brazil, who are striving to free their country from the foreign dependence and medieval obscurantism which are preventing the development of the productive forces of this enormous, potentially wealthy country, and which are dooming the majority of the 45,000,000 of the population to all the misery of boundless poverty and oppression.

Prestes is the living embodiment of the heroic struggle of the people of Brazil.

This "Knight of Hope" as the people themselves have christened him, as a young man of 24 ideologically prepared and organized the first anti-imperialist movement in the capital of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, and in the state of Mato Grosso, in 1922. This first movement was suppressed. However, it did not weaken Prestes' determination to continue the struggle. His belief in the national liberation of his country became more steely and gathered strength.

In October, 1924, at the head of insurgent detachments of soldiers and officers, Prestes led the movement which had grown in the country for the national independence of Brazil. For a long period of time, the revolutionary detachments, led by Prestes, successfully resisted the government forces which were many times superior to them in numbers. The famous insurgent detachment, which has gone down in history as the "Prestes column", continued its revolutionary march through the country, breaking through the front of the government troops in spite of the defeat suffered by the other section of the insurgents which was surrounded on all sides by government troops and had capitulated.

Despite privations and misfortunes, Prestes, a brilliant, talented young captain, with an assured future and career ahead of him, but filled with an ardent love for his people and his country, preferred rather to fight than to surrender and led the column through forests and over mountains, traversing the vast territories of his country.

The popularity enjoyed by Prestes' march among the people, and his own personal qualities of courage, determination, boundless loyalty to the cause, and military knowledge, rendered it possible for the "Prestes

column", pursued as it was by government troops, to pass through ten states in Brazil, covering a distance of 25,000 kilometers. On every side the local population gave the Prestes' column the most enthusiastic support.

Worn out by a struggle which was beyond its strength, the "Prestes column", aware that defeat awaited it, for the enemy was considerably stronger, found itself forced to cross the frontier into Bolivian territory.

Despite the fact that the "Prestes column" was forced to retreat, its march has gone down in the history of Brazil as an epic story of revolutionary heroism unequalled in the whole of the preceding history of the people of Brazil, as an unforgettable page in its anti-imperialist struggle.

The march of the "Prestes column" facilitated the *awakening of national consciousness among the broad masses of the people of Brazil.*

Passing from one state to another, and maintaining contacts chiefly with the masses of the peasantry, the "Prestes column" did not a little to foster the *growth of the anti-feudal movement of the peasants.*

The experiences of the march were used and studied by the *foremost elements among the Brazilian proletariat*, who drew lessons from this march for their future struggle.

Despite the fact that at the time when he led the courageous struggle of his rebel column, Prestes did not follow to the end a *consistent anti-imperialist and anti-feudal fighting program*, yet the logic of the very struggle for the national independence of Brazil drove him to take the road of organizing the masses, the road of drawing the widest sections of the population into their country's liberation struggle, the road of struggle and not of capitulation. And herein lies the historic importance of the march of the "Prestes column". Herein lies the key to the understanding of the reason why it was that Prestes himself, a true friend of the people, a man bound to them by indissoluble ties of struggle and suffering, rapidly overcame the petty-bourgeois illusions of the first stage of the struggle and came over to the side of Communism; herein lies the key to the understanding of the reason why it was that when the wave of the revolutionary, anti-imperialist movement reached new heights hitherto unprecedented in the country, the masses of the people of Brazil put forward precisely Prestes as their popular leader.

In Brazil, a land where the economic life is at a semi-colonial level, where the exploitation of the masses by foreign capital and the bourgeois-landlord upper strata is of a truly monstrous kind, the crisis, which is looming wide masses of the people to hunger, poverty and slow death, made itself felt in an extremely acute form and assisted in bringing about a sharp intensification of the social contradictions inside the country, and a growth of political consciousness among the broad masses of the people.

The Vargas government still further intensified the discontent among the broad masses of the people by its policy of selling lock, stock and barrel, all the national wealth of the country to the magnates of the city and Wall Street, by its open support of the fascist elements inside the country, by its merciless suppression of the struggle for independence and for even the most elementary demands put forward by

the people, by intensifying economic oppression and exploitation, and by stirring up internecine strife among the different nationalities in Brazil. These were the circumstances in which, especially in 1934 and 1935, the revolutionary movement and the desire of the masses of the people to unite all their forces in the fight for national liberation increased throughout the country.

An extensive wave of strikes broke out, in which over 1,500,000 people took part. Street demonstrations and armed conflicts became more frequent.

In different states the peasants fought against the high tariffs and taxation, and against the confiscation of their lands by the landlords because of inability to pay their rent.

Cases of the peasants giving their support to strikes became more and more frequent (in the state of Sao Paulo and Rio Grande del Norte the peasants and small traders gave their support to the workers on strike on the English railway). The traders and handicraftsmen have not infrequently given their support to workers on strike. In the army, not only among the junior and middle officers, but also among the high army officers, discontent grew at the brazen behavior of the reactionaries.

The insolent policy of the Brazil fascists (the Integralists) aroused anger among very wide masses of the people.

It was in these circumstances of growing discontent that a broad anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movement came into being, and a people's front and its organization, the National Liberation Alliance, were established.

The latter grew up in the heat of the struggle, in the process of strikes and demonstrations, of the peasant movement and the movement among the soldiers and officers. It grew up and developed as a protest against the growth of the fascist movement inside the country, and the increase of oppression and enslavement; it originated as a weapon of struggle against the treacherous, anti-popular, anti-national policy of the Vargas government. It grew up out of the vitally urgent tasks facing the national liberation movement of Brazil.

All those hostile to the national enslavement of Brazil joined the National Liberation Alliance. Well-known social workers from the various sections of society fought in its ranks. Professors, scientists, doctors, lawyers, parliamentary deputies from the opposition parties, important military authorities from the Brazilian army have declared themselves in sympathy with the cause of the N.L.A.

General Migel Costa (revolutionary leader in 1924-26) and Manuel Rabelo (Commander of the Northeast region), Major Barat (Ex-Governor of Para) and others, have not disguised their sympathy for the cause of the National Liberation Alliance.

The efforts of the workers, peasants, students, advanced intellectuals, and military and all other social strata, who are in opposition to the treacherous anti-national policy of Vargas, have all joined in one torrent of opposition in the struggle for the national independence of Brazil.

Wide masses of the people, taught by the bitter experience of constant betrayal in the course of the preceding struggles, now understand

that the all-round development and victory of the people's front can be guaranteed only by an organization which has a clear fighting program and is led by a man who has shown in deeds that as far as he is concerned the interests of the people and the national liberation of his country stand above all else, and whose courage, iron determination, honesty and valor have won the love and respect of all the people.

In Brazil, only Luis Carlos Prestes could be this man.

This is why Luis Carlos Prestes was chosen as the honorary president of the National Liberation Alliance, when it arose in the beginning of 1935.

The members of the alliance themselves in their manifesto declared Prestes to be just the man whose talent, experience and loyalty will ensure that the program of the N.L.A. is carried out.

"Prestes was elected honorary President of the National Liberation Alliance because, despite the fact that he has been driven out of the country, the people consider him their hero, and see in him the embodiment of the most irreconcilable, sincere determination to fight for our national emancipation."

So said Vale Cabrol, one of the leaders of the N.L.A. Prestes himself regarded his election to the position of honorary president of the N.L.A. as an endeavor to endow the movement with a truly popular, truly anti-imperialist character. In his letter to the President of the N.L.A. he wrote that his "name was indeed put forward spontaneously by the masses themselves who wanted, apparently, to endow the N.L.A. with a fighting, revolutionary, anti-imperialist character."

Prestes, as the ideological inspirer of the national liberation movement in Brazil, has pointed out more than once that the strength of this movement is determined by the degree to which the broad masses of workers and peasants partake in it, and by the extent to which the proletariat and its revolutionary party influence this movement.

By all the experiences of his struggle, Prestes has demonstrated to the oppressed peoples of the whole world, and especially of the semi-colonial and colonial countries, that by becoming a Communist he not only did not cease to regard himself as the representative of the interests of the broadest masses of Brazil, but, on the contrary, by arming himself with the theory of Marxism and Leninism he has become imbued with a still greater consciousness and understanding of the fact that, as a revolutionary fighter in a dependent country like Brazil, he can and must be the defender and leader of the whole of the people.

As leader of the people, he followed the development of the mighty National Liberation Alliance movement with the greatest sympathy and attention. The popularity of the National Liberation Alliance grew to such a degree that the government decided to prohibit it several months before it began officially to exist.

On July 12 a decree was published disbanding the National Liberation Alliance. This action called forth the indignation of very wide masses of the people of Brazil, who saw in this new proof of the treacherous anti-popular policy reigning in the country.

Protest strikes broke out directed against the prohibition of the alliance. The government replied to these strikes with a wave of



repression. The fascists grew more brazen, and declared that they were preparing to seize power.

The situation in the country became more and more tense. The intensification of reaction, the acts of mass repression, the closing down of the foremost newspapers and of working class organizations, etc., operated by the Vargas government, provoked spontaneous action by the toilers in the North of Brazil, in the states of Rio Grande del Norte and Pernambuco. This action was suppressed by government troops. After the suppression of the movement in the North, a movement began among various troops in the Rio de Janeiro garrison. In order to cope with the movements which the government itself provoked by its reactionary policy, it declared that the uprisings in the north and among the troops in Rio de Janeiro were inspired by the Comintern, and that Louis Carlos Prestes was their organizer.

Having drowned this spontaneous movement in blood, it set going the whole of its political apparatus so as to lay its hands on Prestes. For four months, the police of Brazil and other South American states hunted after Prestes. And at last they seized hold of him. . . . The leader of the people of Brazil is in jail. But this does not satisfy the Vargas government. A few days ago, the news came by telegraph, the character of which leaves no doubt whatsoever that it has been fabricated in the offices of police headquarters. The news reads that Prestes was betrayed to the police by an American Communist, Victor Allen Barron, who committed suicide after doing so.

There can be no doubt that no one will believe this brazen slander directed against a Communist tortured in a Brazilian jail.

It is an old and tested trick to torture a revolutionary, and to declare that he committed suicide as a result of the pangs of conscience—and then to wash their hands!

We repeat once again that no one will believe this story. This news not only does not cast a shadow on the memory of one of the many who are being tortured, but will give rise to a new wave of indignation and resentment at the provocatory policy of the Vargas government.

Prestes is imprisoned, there is a danger that severe repression will be meted out against him. All those who are at one with the struggle to liberate mankind, irrespective of the differences of opinion or questions of program, tactics, philosophy and religion which divide them, must come forward to the defense of Prestes.

All sincere friends of peace, all who are enemies of fascism and national enslavement, rise in defense of Prestes!

The Vargas government has converted Brazil into a gloomy dungeon. Tens of thousands of the best sons of the Brazilian people are languishing in prisons. There is not enough room in the prisons now, and so ships are being converted into places of confinement. Thousands of fighters for the national independence of Brazil are perishing on islands near the Equator. The flower of the Brazilian people are being destroyed "while attempting to escape" and under guise of "suicide".

In these circumstances the danger that menaces Luis Carlos Prestes is particularly great. Let us exert all our efforts in the fight for the immediate release of Prestes!

# On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations of Trans-Caucasus During the Period of the First Russian Revolution

By L. BERIA

*Below we publish Part II of the report delivered by the Secretary of the Trans-Caucasian Region Committee. The report was delivered on July 21-23, 1935, at a meeting of leading Party workers in Tiflis.*

*The excerpts from Comrade Beria's report show the role of Comrade Stalin, as the organizer and leader of the Bolshevik organizations of the Trans-Caucasus and as an outstanding theoretician of the Bolshevik Party.—EDITORIAL BOARD.]*

IN February, 1904, after escaping from exile (Siberia), Comrade Stalin returned to Tiflis and took up his position at the head of the Bolshevik organizations of Trans-Caucasus, and organized and directed the struggle against the Mensheviks who became particularly active after the Second Congress of the Party, during Comrade Stalin's absence.

Headed by N. Jordania, N. Ramishvili and others, the Mensheviks resorted to evil insinuations and demagoguery, slanderously accusing the Bolsheviks, and particularly Lenin and Stalin of "Blanquism", "Jacobinism", "dictatorial methods", etc.

At the end of 1904, Comrade Stalin set out for Baku, to strengthen the campaign for the convening of the Third Party Congress\* and to further develop the struggle against the Mensheviks, in particular against the representative of the Menshevik Central Committee, Glebov (Noskov), who was at that time in Baku.

Comrade Stalin and the Trans-Caucasian Bolsheviks developed a merciless struggle against the nationalist parties: the Dashnaks, the Federalists, the anarchists, etc. A number of big discussions took place against the anarchists, the Federalists, and others.

A big discussion was held in Tiflis against K. Gogelia, and M. Tseretelli, the anarchist-Kropotkinists, which ended in a complete victory for the Bolsheviks. Big discussions were also conducted against Sh. Meshishvili (Socialist-Revolutionary), N. Mdivani (Federalist), with the leader of the anarchists, Gogelia and others, in Chiatura. Comrade Stalin played a prominent part in all these discussions.

Comrade Keklidze recalls this discussion in the following words:

"In the month of May, 1905, a meeting was convened which became a discussion meeting at which up to 2,000 workers were present. The following spoke at the meeting: Comrade Koba—Stalin; G. Lordkipanidze, on behalf of the Mensheviks; Sh. Meshishvili, on behalf of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; S. Mdivani, on behalf of the Federalists; and

\* The Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party took place in London, 1905.—Ed.

the anarchists, K. Gogelia, and others. The meeting began. Koba spoke first. A big discussion developed. . . . While each opponent cursed and 'fumed' Comrade Koba calmly and immovably crushed and destroyed all the theories of his opponents. Thus, the Bolsheviks were victorious here also. The workers gave their unanimous support to Comrade Koba." (From the Reminiscences of Comrade Keklidze Batlom, member of the Party since 1903.)

*During the period of the first revolution, 1905-07, Comrade Stalin was the only who firmly carried through Lenin's line, was the leader and guide of the Bolsheviks and the revolutionary workers and peasants of the Trans-Caucasus.*

Comrade Stalin and G. Telia, a prominent worker, were sent as delegates from the Trans-Caucasian Bolshevik organizations to the First All-Union Bolshevik Conference in Tammersfors. At this conference, Comrade Stalin was elected to the political commission to edit the resolution of the conference.

It was here that Comrade Stalin came into personal contact with Lenin whom he had known previously only through correspondence.

D. Suliashvili, one who participated in the Leipzig group of Bolsheviks, recalls Comrade Stalin's correspondence in the following words:

"We used to receive inspired letters about Lenin from Comrade Stalin. Comrade M. Davitashvili\* used to receive the letters. In these letters Comrade Stalin declared his admiration for Lenin, for his unswerving, purely Marxist tactics, and for the way he solved questions of Party structure, etc. In one of his letters, Comrade Stalin called Lenin a 'mountain eagle', and was most enthusiastic about his irreconcilable struggle against the Mensheviks. We sent these letters to Lenin, and soon received a reply in which he called Stalin a 'fiery Kolhidite'." (From the Reminiscences of D. Suliashvili.)

During the 1904-07 period, Comrade Stalin, at the time the helmsman of the Trans-Caucasian Bolsheviks, conducted a tremendous amount of theoretical and organizational work. He led and directed the struggle of the whole of the Bolshevik press.

During this period, the following Bolshevik newspapers were published in Trans-Caucasus:

In Tiflis:

*The Caucasian Workers' Page, The Struggle of the Proletariat* (in Georgian, Russian and Armenian); the *New Times* (*Akhali Droeba*), *Times* (*Dro*), *New Life* (*Akhali Tshovreba*), *Our Life* (*Chveni Tshovreba*.)

In Baku:

*Iskra* (*Kants*—in Armenian), *The New Word* (*Norhosk*, in Armenian), *The Baku Worker, The Baku Proletarian, The Voice of the Worker* (*Banvoridzain* in Armenian), *The Rank and Filer, The Siren. The Call, The Kochdevet* (in the Turkish language), and others.

*In his works and articles, Comrade Stalin unfolded the struggle against the Mensheviks, defended, proved and propagated the Leninist teachings as regards the proletarian party and the organizational principles of Bolshevism.*

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\* M. Davitashvili was a member of the Caucasian Union Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1905-07.

In his pamphlet *Briefly About Party Differences*, written in the beginning of 1905, and illegally published in the summer of 1905, and in his article, "A Reply to a Social-Democrat", published in the newspaper *Proletariatis Brdzola*, Comrade Stalin gave a devastating criticism of the Menshevik opportunist theory of spontaneity and proved the teachings of Marx and Lenin as regards the importance of revolutionary theory and a political party for the working class. Here Comrade Stalin defended *What Is To Be Done?* the pamphlet written in 1902 by Lenin.

"A spontaneous working class movement, a movement without socialism, inevitably becomes petty, and takes on trade unionist colors, becomes subordinated to bourgeois ideology.

"But can the conclusion be drawn from this that socialism is everything, and the working class movement, nothing? Of course not! Only idealists can make this assertion. In the long run, economic development will inevitably lead the working class to social revolution, and will liberate them from bourgeois ideology: but the whole point is that this is a road of zigzags and errors.

"On the other hand, socialism outside the working class movement remains an empty phrase and loses all its meaning, on whatever scientific basis it is built. But can we conclude from this that the working class movement is everything, and socialism, nothing? Not by any means. This can only be the reasoning of those quasi-Marxists for whom the idea loses all meaning and is of no importance at all, because it has been worked out by life itself. But socialism can be introduced into the working class movement, and, from being an empty phrase, can become a mighty weapon.

"What is the conclusion? The working class movement must unite with socialism, practical activities must be closely linked up with theory, and thus endow the spontaneous working class movement with a Social-Democratic meaning and physiognomy. . . ." (J. Stalin, *Briefly About Party Differences*, 1905, pp. 15-16, Russian ed.)

In this pamphlet, Comrade Stalin gives the basis of the leading role of revolutionary Social-Democracy:

"We, Social-Democrats, must prevent the spontaneous working class movement from traveling the trade unionist road, we must lead it along Social-Democratic channels, we must introduce socialist consciousness into this movement and rally the advanced forces of the working class into a centralized party. It is our duty, always and everywhere, to lead the movement, to fight energetically against all—be they 'friends' or enemies—who stand in the way of the realization of our sacred aim." J. Stalin, *Briefly About Party Differences*, 1905, p. 16, Russian ed.)

In his article entitled "A Reply to a Social-Democrat" (see the newspaper *Proletariatis Brdzola*, No. 11, dated August 15 (28), 1905), Comrade Stalin develops Lenin's thesis about introducing socialist consciousness into the spontaneous working class movement, the thesis of the need to combine revolutionary theory with the mass working class movement.

"Life today is built on capitalist lines. There exist two big classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and a life and death struggle is



taking place between them. The living conditions of the former compel them to consolidate the capitalist system. The same situation forces the latter to undermine and destroy the capitalist system. Corresponding to these two classes, a two-fold consciousness arises: a bourgeois consciousness and a socialist consciousness. The socialist consciousness corresponds to the position of the proletariat. . . . But what is the use of socialist consciousness alone, if it is not spread among the proletariat? It remains a mere empty phrase and nothing more! Things turn out quite differently if this consciousness is spread among the proletariat; the proletariat become conscious of their conditions and rapidly strive after the socialist life. It is here that Social-Democracy makes its appearance (and not only the intellectual Social-Democrats), which introduces socialist consciousness into the working class movement. . . ."

Lenin gave a brilliant appraisal of Comrade Stalin's article, "A Reply to a Social-Democrat".

In *The Proletarian*, the central organ of the Party, issue No. 22, for 1905, Lenin wrote:

"In the article entitled, 'A Reply to a Social-Democrat' we have an excellent elucidation of the question of the famous 'introduction of consciousness from outside'. The author dissects the question into four independent parts:

"1. The philosophical question of the relation between consciousness and being—being determines consciousness. In accordance with the existence of two classes, a two-fold consciousness, bourgeois and socialist, is elaborated. Socialist consciousness corresponds to the position of the proletariat.

"2. Who can and does elaborate this socialist consciousness (scientific socialism)? Contemporary socialist consciousness can only arise on the basis of profound scientific knowledge, i.e., the elaboration of it 'is the work of a number of intellectuals and Social-Democrats who possess the means and the leisure for it'.

"3. How does this consciousness penetrate among the proletariat? 'It is here that Social-Democracy makes its appearance (and not only intellectual Social-Democrats), which introduces socialist consciousness into the working class movement.'

"4. What does Social-Democracy meet with among the proletariat themselves, when it goes to them with the doctrine of socialism? With the fact that they are instinctively *drawn towards socialism*. 'Side by side with the proletariat, there naturally and essentially arises a socialist tendency both among the proletarians themselves and among those who have mastered the point of view of the proletariat; this is the explanation of the origin of socialist inclinations.'

"The Mensheviks draw the ridiculous conclusion from this that 'Hence it is clear that socialism is not brought to the proletariat from outside, but, on the contrary, comes from the proletariat, and passes into the heads of those who master the outlook of the proletariat'." (Reprinted in *Proletarian Revolution*, No. 4, 1934.)

Comrade Stalin further developed the question of the role and importance of the Party in his article entitled "The Party of the 'Independents' and the Tasks of Social-Democracy" (see *Gentiadi*, No. 5,

March 10, 1906) over the signature "J. Besoshvili", and in an article entitled "Reorganization in Tiflis" (*Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 5 of June 25, 1906). He proved why it is that professional interests, the joint economic struggle of the workers, call forth the need for the organization of trade unions, while the interests of the struggle for the general class tasks of the proletariat demand the creation of a political class party.

"For professional affairs—trade union . . . organizations; for party affairs—party organizations, that is the basis upon which the reorganization must take place. All those who are supporters of the fight against the employers, regardless of their political opinions, must belong to the first, all members of the Party, regardless of their trades, should join the second." (Stalin, "Reorganization in Tiflis"; see the *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 5, June 25, 1906.)

*In connection with the rising tide of revolution, which created definite opportunities for the legal work of the Party, Comrade Stalin raised the question of operating inner-party democracy. He explained the basis of the Bolshevik conception of inner-party democracy in the following way:*

"Real democracy consists in the Party masses being active in the Party organization, in the Party masses deciding both Party questions and practical questions of a general kind, in the Party masses passing their resolutions and compelling their organizations to carry these resolutions into life.

"Democracy does not only consist of democratic elections. The democracy of elections cannot yet be called real democracy: Napoleon III was elected by universal suffrage, but who does not know that this elected emperor was one who tremendously enslaved the people?

"With us it is a question of democracy of action, when the Party masses themselves decide questions and themselves act. And we say that it is precisely this kind of democracy that must constitute the basis of our Social-Democratic organization." (J. Stalin, "Reorganization in Tiflis", see *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 5, June 25, 1905.)

*Comrade Stalin developed the struggle for mass working class organizations, and sharply criticized the position adopted by the Dashnaks, who demanded the organization of Party trade unions, at bottom, national trade unions.*

In his article entitled "Trade Unions in Tiflis", Comrade Stalin wrote the following:

"What is meant by Party trade unions?

"It means, first of all, that the members of the different parties must join different unions . . . the federalists—a separate trade union, the Dashnaks—a separate union, the Georgians—another, the Armenians—another, etc. At a time when all the factory owners are uniting in one alliance, irrespective of their political convictions, the Dashnaks advise us to split into separate groups and thus undermine our unity." (Stalin, "Trade Unions in Tiflis", see the *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 12, August 15, 1906.)

Further on he pointed out the harm which could be brought about by the slogan of "Party trade unions".

"The point is," wrote Comrade Stalin, "that Party trade unions dig

a gulf between the class-conscious and non class-conscious workers. Everybody knows that there are workers who belong to no party at all. . . . Are they not to be brought in? And instead of drawing them in, the Dashnaks close the doors of the trade unions against them, scare them away, break down the bridge between the class-conscious and non class-conscious workers, and thus considerably weaken working class unity." (*Ibid.*)

In the articles "The Party of the 'Independents' and the Tasks of Social-Democracy" (see the *Gantiadi*, No. 5, of March 10, 1906, over the signature of "J. Besoshvili"), "The Struggle of the Classes" (*Akhali Droeba*, No. 1, November 14, 1906), and others, *Comrade Stalin showed the need for a strong Party leadership in the trade unions.*

During the years of the first revolution, every step of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of the Trans-Caucasus was won by the Bolsheviks in an irreconcilable struggle against the Mensheviks.

The Trans-Caucasian Mensheviks, who rejected the Bolshevik appraisal of the character of the driving forces and tasks of the revolution, opposed the slogan of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and opposed the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution.

The Mensheviks determinedly rejected the need for a revolutionary government and a universal armed uprising, and put forward demands for: the organization of revolutionary self-government, alliance with the bourgeoisie, constitutional, democratic methods of struggle against the autocracy, declaring that the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry was a Blanquist scheme.

The Trans-Caucasian Mensheviks consistently pursued their treacherous tactics of disrupting the revolution, foully betrayed the workers and peasants who were eager for the revolutionary uprising, and called them to take the road of compromise with the bourgeoisie, and led them into negotiations with the government.

As we know, on August 29, 1905, as a result of this policy of the Mensheviks, a bloody conflict broke out between the unarmed workers of Tiflis and the police, in the Town Council building, and on Erivan Square in Tiflis.

The Mensheviks greeted the October manifesto of the tsar in 1905 with joy and delight; in their opinion it opened up an epoch of the bourgeois-constitutional order in Russia.

This is how Comrade Toroshelidze recalls the Menshevik attitude to the tsarist manifesto of October 17, 1905:

"On the day the 1905 manifesto was published, a meeting was called in Nadzaladevi (in Tiflis). The well-known Menshevik Noi Ramishvili, stood on the platform, and intoxicated by the 'victory' triumphantly announced: 'Henceforth there is no autocracy—the autocracy is dead. Russia now takes its place in the ranks of the countries with constitutional monarchies. Henceforth our slogan will not be "Down with the autocracy", but "Down with the monarchy".' He was followed by a number of speakers who repeated the same thing. Finally, one speaker

ended his oration with the words: 'We want no guns, down with guns.' And the people applauded him warmly as well. . . .

"At that moment, Comrade Koba (Stalin) appeared on the platform: 'You have one bad habit which I must speak about frankly,' he began, 'Whatever happens, and whatever you are told, you always meet it with joy and applause. They say to you: "Long live liberty," and you applaud, "Long live the revolution," and you applaud; that is all right. But when they say to you "Down with guns", you applaud as well. What revolution can be victorious without guns, and what sort of revolutionary is he who says: "Down with guns"? The speaker who says that is most likely a Tolstoyan, and not a revolutionary, and whoever he may be, he is an enemy of the revolution, of the freedom of the people.'

"There was a stir among the crowds, and voices were heard asking 'Who is he? How bitingly he speaks! The language of a Jacobin!'

"Koba continued: 'What is wanted, if we are really to be victorious? Three things are wanted for this, understand them well and remember: the first thing we need is arms, the second, arms and the third—again and again arms'. There was a stormy burst of applause, and the speaker left the platform." (M. Toroshelidze, see the *Communist*, No. 294, 1929.)

After the October manifesto, the Mensheviks increased their campaign for the convention of the State Duma; they openly appealed to the workers and peasants to restore order, to disarm, and to organize a constitutional struggle for reforms.

The Bolsheviks of the Trans-Caucasus, after the October manifesto, still further increased the struggle to unmask the treacherous tactics of Menshevism, and to organize an armed uprising of the workers and peasants against tsarism.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin at the Fourth Bolshevik Conference of the Caucasian Union of the R.S.D.L.P., attended by representatives of the Baku, Imeretino-Mingrel, Tiflis, Batum committees and the Guri group, in November, 1905, a decision was passed to intensify the struggle to prepare for and conduct an armed uprising, to boycott the tsarist Duma, to develop and consolidate the revolutionary organizations of the workers and peasants—the strike committees, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and the revolutionary peasant committee.

At the end of 1905, the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of the Trans-Caucasus waned because of the treacherous, compromising tactics of the Mensheviks and the spread of the constitutional illusions, zealously sown by the Mensheviks.

*In the struggle against the Trans-Caucasian Mensheviks, Comrade Stalin defended, proved and propagated the Leninist theory of revolution, the Bolshevik, strategic slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, the idea of developing the bourgeois-democratic into the socialist revolution, and the tactical tasks facing the proletariat.*

Untiringly, day in and day out, Comrade Stalin led the ideological, theoretical and political struggle against the Russian and Trans-Caucasian Mensheviks.

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Speaking at the Fourth United Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (Stock-



holm, 1906) Comrade Stalin (Ivanovich) explained the need of proletarian leadership in the revolution in the following words:

"We are on the eve of a new outburst, the wave of revolution is rising, and we must bring it to its culmination. On this we are all agreed. But what are the circumstances in which we can and must do this: in circumstances where the hegemony is in the hands of the proletariat or of the bourgeois democracy? This is where the basic difference arises. As long ago as the time when he wrote his *Two Dictatorships*, Comrade Martynov said that the hegemony of the proletariat was a harmful utopia in the present bourgeois revolution. In his speech yesterday the same idea was there. The comrades who applauded him are apparently in agreement with him. If this is so, if in the opinion of the Menshevik comrades what we need is not the hegemony of the proletariat, but the hegemony of the democratic bourgeoisie, then it is obviously clear that we should not take a directly active part in organizing an armed uprising, or in seizing power. This is the 'scheme' of the Mensheviks.

"On the contrary, if the class interests of the proletariat lead to the hegemony of the latter, if the proletariat have not to drag at the tail of events, but to lead the present revolution, then it stands to reason that the proletariat cannot reject either active participation in the organization of the armed uprising, or in the seizure of power. This is the 'scheme' of the Bolsheviks. The question before the Party, the essence of our differences is: either the hegemony of the proletariat or the hegemony of the democratic bourgeoisie." (Stenogram of the Fourth United Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., 1934, p. 235, Russian edition.)

In his pamphlet entitled *The Present Moment and the United Congress of the Labor Party* (1906), Comrade Stalin explained and developed the Bolshevik viewpoint on the character and driving forces of the revolution, on the attitude towards the State Duma and the armed uprising, and at the same time gave a comprehensive, devastating criticism of the liberal-bourgeois viewpoint of the Mensheviks:

"Now it is no secret at all that the revolution of the people has not perished but, in spite of the 'December defeat', it continues to grow and is rushing forward to its culmination. We say that this is just as it should be: the driving forces of the revolution are not slackening; the crisis which has broken out is becoming more and more intense; the famine which is entirely ruining the village is getting worse and spreading as each day passes, and this means that the hour is at hand when the revolutionary indignation of the people will rush forth in a menacing torrent.

"Yes, the facts tell us that a new offensive is being prepared, one more ferocious and powerful than the December offensive; we are on the eve of an uprising.

"On the other hand, forces are being gathered together, and the counter-revolution, loathed by the people, is gradually strengthening itself. It has already succeeded in organizing a camarilla; it is calling all the forces of darkness to its banner; it is taking over the leadership of the Black Hundreds 'movement'; it is preparing a new attack against the people's revolution; it is rallying to itself all the blood-thirsty land-

lords and factory owners, and with pomp and noise it is preparing to crush the people's revolution.

"And the more time passes, the sharper is the division of the land into two hostile camps: the camp of revolution and the camp of counter-revolution; the more menacingly do the two leaders of the two camps, the proletariat and the tsarist government, stand confronting each other, and the clearer becomes the fact that all bridges between them have been burned. It is one of two things: *either* the victory of the revolution and the autocracy of the people, or the victory of counter-revolution and the tsarist autocracy. Anyone who sits between the two stools betrays the revolution. Those who are not with us are against us! The miserable Duma with its miserable Cadets is getting stuck between these two stools. It wants to reconcile the revolution and the counter-revolution, it wants the lion to lie down with the lamb, and thus to pacify the storm of revolution 'with one blow'. That is why up to now the Duma has engaged exclusively in treading water; that is why it has been unable to rally any of the people to itself, and has been forced to dilly-dally fruitlessly. The street again remains the chief arena of the struggle. Facts prove this. Moreover, the same facts tell us that it is in the present struggle, the struggle in the streets, and not in the chatter in the Duma, that the forces of counter-revolution are growing weak and becoming shattered with every day that passes, while the forces of revolution are growing and being mobilized, and that the mustering and organization of the revolutionary forces are taking place under the leadership of the foremost workers, and not the bourgeoisie. And this means that it *is possible* for the present revolution to be victorious and to carry it through to the end. However, it is possible only if the foremost workers will continue to stand at the head of it in the future, if the class-conscious proletariat worthily fulfil the task of leading the revolution."

In July, 1906, in connection with the dissolution of the First State Duma, Comrade Stalin called upon the masses to undertake the revolutionary struggle outside the Duma in the following words:

"Reaction has dissolved the Duma, consequently it is our duty not to be satisfied with a future quasi-parliament on the lines of the Duma, but to fight still more self-sacrificingly for a real parliament, for a democratic republic." (Article entitled "Reaction Is Becoming More Piercing, Unite More Closely", see *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 17, July 11, 1906.)

"... Following on the dissolved Duma there must come the organized street, on the ruins of the Duma we must build up the power of the street." (Article entitled "The Dissolved Duma and the United Street", see *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 18, July 12, 1906.)

Comrade Stalin explained the Bolshevik program on the agrarian question.

In issues Nos. 5, 9, 10, and 11 of the newspaper *Elva* issued in March, 1906, Comrade Stalin's articles on the agrarian question appeared under the signature, "J. Besoshvili", in which he determinedly defended the slogan of the confiscation of the land:

"This alone (confiscation) can bring the peasant movement to its

conclusion, this alone can strengthen the energy of the people, this alone can scatter the obsolete remnants of feudal bondage." ("The Agrarian Question," Article No. 1, see *Elva*, March 17, 1906.)

Hence the conclusion:

"The movement in the villages today is a movement to liberate the peasants.

"... To liberate the peasants, the remnants of *feudal bondage* must be destroyed, while to destroy these remnants, all the lands belonging to the landlords and the government must be confiscated." ("The Agrarian Question," Article 2, see *Elva*, March 22, 1906.)

Comrade Stalin gave a crushing reply to those who clung to the old treatment of the land question, to the demand for confiscation of the *otrezki*\* (1903):

"In 1903, when the Party talked about *otrezki*, the Russian peasantry had not yet been drawn into the movement. It was the duty of the Party then to issue such a slogan in the villages as would fire the hearts of the peasants and arouse the peasantry against the remnants of feudal bondage. The slogan about *otrezki* was precisely the one which clearly reminded the Russian peasantry of the injustice of the remnants of feudal bondage.

"The times have changed since then. The peasant movement has grown. . . . Today it is a question not of *how* to set the peasantry in motion, but of what *the peasantry, now in motion, must demand*. It is clear that definite demands are required here, and so the Party tells the peasantry to demand the confiscation of all lands." ("The Agrarian Question," Article 1, see *Elva*, March 17, 1906.)

In a preface to Kautsky's pamphlet *The Driving Forces of the Russian Revolution* (February, 1907), Comrade Stalin once more explained and developed the views of the Bolsheviks on the character and driving forces of the Russian revolution, on the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, on the hegemony of the proletariat, and the counter-revolutionary part played by the bourgeoisie, and on participation in a provisional revolutionary government.

In connection with the influx of anarchist-Kropotkinists into the Trans-Caucasus in 1906-07, Comrade Stalin wrote a number of theoretical articles on the subject of "Anarchism or Socialism", (see the *Akhali Tshovreba* Nos. 2, 4, 9, of June 21, 24, 28, and No. 16 of July 9, 1905, and in the *Akhali Droeba* Nos. 5, 6, and 7, of December 11, 18, 25, 1906, and No. 8 of January 1, 1907, also the *Chveni Tshovreba* Nos. 4 and 9, February 23 and 27, 1907, and the *Dro*, Nos. 21, 22, 23, of April 4, 5, 7, 1907).

In these articles, Comrade Stalin developed the teachings of Marx on the foundations of dialectic materialism. With extreme profundity, he elaborated the question of the inevitability and unavoidability of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the need for a militant proletarian party, and also the tasks of its strategy and tactics. These works are an example of how profound questions of Marxist-Leninist theory are linked up with the urgent tasks of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

\* *Otrezki* or segments, i.e., sections of common land formerly used by the peasants and annexed by the landlords.

We give here a number of excerpts from these works of Comrade Stalin:

*Concerning Reformism.* "Reformism (Bernstein and others) which regards socialism only as a distant aim and nothing more, reformism, which in fact denies the socialist revolution and tries to establish socialism by peaceful means, reformism which preaches collaboration between the classes, and not the struggle between the classes—this reformism is decaying from day to day, this reformism is losing every vestige of socialism, with every day that passes." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Akhali Droeba*, No. 5, December 11, 1906.)

*On Anarchism.* "Marxism and anarchism are built on entirely different principles, in spite of the fact that they both come onto the arena of struggle under the Socialist flag. The cornerstone of anarchism is the individual, the liberation of whom, in its opinion, is the chief condition for the emancipation of the masses, *i.e.*, according to anarchism, it is impossible to emancipate the masses until the individual has been liberated, and consequently, the anarchist slogan is 'All for the Individual', while the cornerstone of Marxism is the *masses*, the emancipation of whom, according to Marxism, is the chief condition necessary for the emancipation of the individual, *i.e.*, according to Marxism, it is impossible to emancipate the individual until the masses themselves are emancipated, in view of which the slogan of Marxism is: 'All for the Masses'." ("Anarchism or Socialism," see *Akhali Droeba*, No. 5, December 11, 1906.)

*On the Connection Between the Marxist Philosophy and Scientific Communism.* "Marxism is not merely the theory of socialism, it is an entire world conception, a philosophic system from which the proletarian socialism of Marx logically follows. This philosophic system is called dialectic materialism." ("Anarchism or Socialism," see *Akhali Tshoebba*, No. 2, June 21, 1905.)

*On the Dialectic Method.* "What is the dialectic method? . . . It is said that life consists of continuous growth and development, and that is true: life is not something unchanging, something set, it never stops at one level, it is in perpetual motion, of destruction and creation. It was not for nothing that Marx said: 'Perpetual movement, perpetual destruction and creation—such is the essence of life.' That is why in life there always exists *the new and the old*, what is growing and what is dying, revolution and reaction—in life, something is sure to be dying, and at the same time something is sure to be coming into life. . . .

"The dialectic method says that life must be regarded just as it really exists, in actuality. Life is in perpetual motion, therefore it is our duty to examine life in its movement, in destruction and creation. The questions which must interest us, first and foremost, are: where is life going, what is dying and what is coming into being, what is being destroyed, and what being created. Such is the first conclusion of the dialectic method.

"It is impossible to check the forward advance of that which is coming into being and growing invincibly with every day that passes, its victory is inevitable, *i.e.*, if, for example, the proletariat come into being, and grow from day to day, however weak and few in numbers



they may be today, nevertheless, in the long run they will be victorious. And, on the contrary, that which is dying in life and moving towards the grave, must inevitably suffer defeat, *i.e.*, if, for example, the bourgeoisie are losing their hold and are going backwards day by day, in the long run, however strong and numerous their forces are today, they must suffer defeat and enter the grave. Hence there arises the well-known dialectic thesis to the effect that all that really exists, *i.e.*, all that is growing from day to day, is reasonable.

"Such is the second conclusion of the dialectic method. A noteworthy discussion arose among the Russian revolutionary intellectuals in the eighties of the nineteenth century. The Narodniks said that the main force which could take upon itself the task of 'liberating Russia' was the poor peasantry. Why?—the Marxists asked them. Because, they were told in reply, the peasants are the most numerous and at the same time the poorest of all in Russian society. To which the Marxists replied: it is true that today the peasantry constitute the majority and that they are very poor, but is that the point? The peasantry have long constituted the majority, but up to now, without the assistance of the proletariat, the peasantry have displayed no initiative in the struggle for 'freedom'. And why? Because the peasantry, as a social group, are being destroyed day by day, are disintegrating into the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat as a class are growing and gathering strength *with every day that passes*. And it is not poverty that is of decisive importance here: 'beggars' are poorer than peasants, but nobody can say that they will take it upon themselves to 'liberate Russia'.

"The only question is who is growing and who is aging in life. And as the proletariat are the only class constantly growing and striving to live, it is our duty to take up our place side by side with them and recognize them as the chief force in the Russian revolution—so replied the Marxists. As you see, the Marxists looked upon the question from the dialectic point of view, while the Narodniks argued metaphysically, because they looked upon life as something 'fixed at one point'. (See *F. Engels, Philosophy, Political Economy and Socialism.*)

"This is how the dialectic method regards the movement of life.

"But there is movement and movement. There was a movement of life in the 'December days', when the proletariat with bent backs, hurled themselves upon the stores of arms and attacked reaction. But the movement of the preceding years, when the 'appeased' proletariat built small unions and in some places took strike action, must also be called a movement of life. It is obvious that there are different forms of movement. And on this point the dialectic method says that there is a twofold kind of movement: evolutionary and revolutionary. Movement is evolutionary, when the progressive elements spontaneously continue their daily work and introduce small, *quantitative* changes into the old order. The movement is revolutionary when these same elements unite, are imbued with one idea and rush towards the hostile camp with rapid steps, in order to destroy to the very roots the old order with its *characteristic features*, and set up a new order. Evolution prepares, and provides the ground for revolution, and revolution crowns evolution

and facilitates its further work." (See *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 2, pp. 2-3, June 12, 1906.)

*On the Contradiction Between Form and Content in the Process of Dialectical Development.* "Consciousness and being, mind and matter—these are two different forms of one and the same phenomenon, which is called, speaking generally, nature. Consequently, therefore, they do not deny each other, and at the same time do not represent one and the same phenomenon. . . .

"This by no means contradicts the idea that a conflict exists between form and content. The point is that the conflict does not exist between the content and the form in general, but between the old form and the new content, which seeks a new form and strives after it." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Akhali Droeba*, No. 7, December 25, 1906.)

*On the Materialistic Theory.* "What is the materialistic theory? Everything on earth changes, everything in the world is moving, but the question is, *how* does this change take place, *in what form* does this movement come about. . . .

"Some say that nature and its development was preceded by a universal idea, which afterwards lay at the basis of this development, so that the course of natural phenomena proves to be the empty *form* of the development of ideas. These people were called idealists, and they subsequently divided up into several currents of thought. And some say that from the very beginning of the world there have existed two contrary forces—mind and matter—and that correspondingly, phenomena are divided into two kinds, ideal and material, between which a constant struggle is taking place; so that the development of natural phenomena, it seems, represents a constant struggle between ideal and material phenomena. These are called the dualists, who, like the idealists, are divided into different currents of thought. The materialist theory of Marx radically rejects both dualism and idealism. It goes without saying that the world is really divided into mental and material phenomena, but this does not at all mean that they negate each other. On the contrary, ideal and material phenomena are two different forms of one and the same phenomena, they exist together and develop together, and there is a close connection between them. Consequently therefore, we have no cause to think that they negate each other. Thus, the so-called dualism radically falls to the ground. We must regard the development of nature in the following way: nature is united and undivided, expressed in two different forms—the ideal and the material. We must regard the development of life in the following way: life is united and undivided, expressed in two different forms—the ideal and the material.

"Such is the monism of the materialist theory of Marx.

"At the same time Marx denies idealism as well. The view that the idea and in general the spiritual side in its development *precedes* nature and the material side in general is a wrong one.

"Consequently for the development of the spiritual side itself, what is needed is some sort of structure of the organism and the development of its nervous system. Consequently, the development of the spiritual side, the development of the idea is preceded by the development of the material side, the development of being. It is clear that at

first there is a change in the outward conditions, at first there is a change in matter, and *then* correspondingly in mind and other spiritual phenomena—the development of the ideal side lags behind the development of the material conditions. If we call the material side the outward conditions, being, etc., the *content* then we must call the ideal side, the consciousness, etc., of the phenomena. Hence arises the well-known materialist thesis to the effect that in the process of development, content precedes form, and form lags behind content. The same must be said of social life. Here also material development precedes ideal development, and here form lags behind its content. There had not yet been any mention of scientific socialism, when capitalism already existed and a fierce class struggle was already being conducted; the socialist idea had nowhere yet arisen, when the process of production had already taken on a social character.

"Therefore, says Marx, 'it is not the consciousness of people that determines their social being, but their social being which determines their consciousness' (see *Critique of Political Economy* by Marx). Thus, in Marx's opinion, economic development is the material basis of life, its *content*, while juridical-political and religious-philosophical development is the '*ideological form*' of this content—its 'superstructure'; therefore Marx says: 'With the change in the economic foundation a change comes about sooner or later in its superstructure' (*ibid.*).

"Yes, and in life, first, the outward, material conditions change, and *then*, the thoughts of people, their world outlook. The development of the content precedes the origin and development of the form. Of course, this by no means signifies that, according to Marx, there can be content without form, as it seemed to Sh. G. (see *Nob*, No. 1 'Criticism of Monism').

"Content without form is impossible; but the point is, that this or that *form*, in view of the fact that it lags behind the content, can never *fully* coincide with this content, and so, often the new content 'is forced' temporarily to remain in the old form, and this causes conflicts to arise between them. Today, for example, the *social* character of production does not correspond to the *private* character of the appropriation of the articles produced, and it is precisely on this ground that the social 'conflict' takes place today. On the other hand, the view that the idea is a form of existence by no means signifies that consciousness is by its nature the same matter. Only vulgar materialists (like Buchner and Molechotte who radically contradict the materialism of Marx, and who were justly jeered at by Engels in his 'Feuerbach'), can think this. . . .

"It is not difficult to understand the importance of the monistic materialism of Marx and Engels in connection with the practical activities of men. If our world outlook, our morals, our customs are given rise to by outward conditions, if the worthlessness of juridical and political forms is created in their economic content, then it is clear that we must assist in the radical reconstruction of economic relations, in order that, together with them, the morals and customs of the people, and the political system of the country, will be changed." (See *Akhali Tshovreba*, No. 7, 1906, June 28, pp. -23.

*On the Class Struggle and the Inevitability of Proletarian Revolu-*

ion. "Strikes, boycotts, parliamentarism, demonstrations, manifestations—are all very good as a means of preparing and organizing the proletariat. But not one of these means is able to destroy the existing inequality.

The proletariat cannot achieve socialism through reconciliation with the bourgeoisie; they must without fail take the road of struggle, and this struggle must be the class struggle, the struggle of the whole of the proletariat against the whole of the bourgeoisie. It is a case of either the bourgeoisie with their capitalism, or the proletariat with their socialism. This is what must be the basis of the activity of the proletariat, their class struggle." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Chveni Tshovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907.)

"All these forms of struggle are only preparatory measures for the proletariat, but not one of these forms taken separately can represent the decisive means by which the proletariat can crush capitalism.

"The only means is socialist revolution." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Chveni Tshovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907.)

*Concerning the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Their Class Struggle and the Bases of the Tactics of the Proletarian Party in the Socialist Revolution.* "The socialist revolution is not an unexpected, quick blow, it is the prolonged action of the proletarian masses, who defeat the bourgeoisie and deprive them of their positions. And since the victory of the proletariat will at the same time be domination over the vanquished bourgeoisie, and since during the conflict between the classes the defeat of one signifies the domination of the other, the first stage of the socialist revolution will be the political domination of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie." ("Anarchy or Socialism," *Chveni Tshovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907.)

"The socialist revolution must begin with the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, the seizure of political power by the proletariat.

"As long as the bourgeoisie are not completely vanquished, as long as their wealth is not confiscated, the proletariat will be compelled to have at their disposal an armed force, they will inevitably have their 'proletarian guard', with the help of which to repulse the counter-revolutionary attacks of the dying bourgeoisie." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Chveni Tshovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907.)

"From this general principle follow all the remaining tactical views. Strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, parliamentarism, are of importance only in so far as they facilitate the organization of the proletariat, the consolidation and extension of their organizations, for the maturing of the socialist revolution." ("Anarchism or Socialism" see *Chveni Tshovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907.)

*Concerning the Class Organization of the Proletariat and the Need for a Proletarian Party.* "The aim of the unions is to struggle (chiefly) against industrial capital to improve the conditions of the workers. . . .

"The aim of the cooperatives is to struggle (chiefly) against trading capital to increase the consumption of the workers, by lowering prices on essential products.

"The above-mentioned organizations cannot go beyond the capitalist framework . . . but the workers want complete emancipation from



capitalist slavery, the workers want to break down this very framework.

"Therefore, yet another organization is required, such as will rally to itself all the class-conscious elements of the workers of all professions, convert the proletariat into a conscious class, and make its chief goal the destruction of the capitalist system and the preparation of the socialist revolution." ("Anarchism or Socialism, see *Dro*, No. 21, April 4, 1907.)

*On the Building of a New Kind of Proletarian Party.* "This party must be a class party, completely independent of other parties, and this because it is the party of the proletarian class, whose emancipation can come about only through the efforts of the proletarians themselves.

"This party must be a revolutionary party, and this, because the emancipation of the workers is possible only by revolutionary means, with the aid of the socialist revolution.

"This party must be an international party, the doors of the party must be open to every class-conscious proletarian, and this, because the emancipation of the workers is not a national, but a social question, which is of equal importance for the Georgian proletarian, and for the Russian proletarian, and for the proletarians of other nations.

"Hence, it is clear that the more closely the proletarians of different nations rally together, the more thoroughly the national walls elevated between them are thrown down, the stronger will the party of the proletariat be, the easier will it be to organize the proletariat into one indivisible class." ("Anarchism or Socialism," *Dro*, No. 21, April 4, 1907.)

Comrade Stalin carried out all his theoretical work with infinite consistency and on lines of strict principle, mercilessly fighting against opportunism in the Russian and international movement, against Bernsteinism and Russian Menshevism, against the Georgian Mensheviks, the "miniature Bernsteinists" (expression used by Stalin), who were trying to adapt Marxism to suit the requirements of the bourgeoisie.

*Thus, the Trans-Caucasian Bolsheviks, led by Comrade Stalin, armed with the Leninist strategy and tactics of revolution, constituted the only revolutionary organization which headed the struggle of the workers and peasants to lead the revolution to its victorious conclusion, to overthrow the autocracy and set up the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.*

## I. Sirola—In Memoriam

COMRADE I. SIROLA, old Finnish revolutionary, and one of the best and foremost fighters not only of the Finnish but also of the international working class movement, has died.

As far back as 1903, Comrade Sirola was active in the working class movement in Finland. He played an outstanding role in the 1905 General Strike, in the mass struggle for universal suffrage, and in the leadership of the old Finnish Social-Democratic Party (he was elected Secretary of the Party in 1905). Comrade Sirola carried on a struggle against the Rights in the ranks of the old Social-Democratic Party. For several years he was also active in America among Finnish workers, and took part in the then Left movement of the I.W.W.

When the new upsurge of the revolutionary movement took place in 1917, Comrade Sirola gave himself up, heart and soul, to participating in this movement, and called on the masses of the people in Finland to fight side by side with the Russian workers, and with the Party of Lenin. In January, 1918, Comrade Sirola belonged to the group of the Central Committee of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party which then stood at the head of the revolutionary movement. Comrade Sirola was in charge of foreign affairs in the workers' government of Southern Finland. On the basis of the lessons of the revolution which lasted three months, and of its heavy defeat, Comrade Sirola re-equipped himself and completely mastered the strategy and tactics of Bolshevism. He became one of the founders of the Finnish Communist Party, and from 1918 onwards was elected a member of its Central Committee at the Congresses of the Party.

Comrade Sirola also took an active part in the international movement. He took part in the Zimmerwald Conference in 1917. He was a member of the delegation of the Communist Party of Finland to the First Congress of the Communist International, where he made a report about the White Terror. He was frequently elected at Congresses of the Comintern to membership of the International Control Commission (1921-1922 and 1928-36). He also maintained close contacts with the Communist Party of Sweden.

Comrade Sirola has left the working class movement a rich heritage in the form of his tireless literary activity. He had a superb mastery of the weapon of Marxist-Leninist propaganda and agitation, wrote numerous articles in the Communist press, and translated many of the works of Marx, Lenin and Stalin into the Finnish and Swedish languages.

Comrade Sirola did especially valuable work in training new forces in the Communist movement. This task constituted his main work during the last 15 years of his life. He gave all the strength of his brilliant spirit to this beloved work of his. He was also such a remarkable teacher of Leninism, and explained the history and experience of the Bolshevik Party, the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, and the decisions of the Comintern with such enthusiasm and ability, that his pupils

could never forget what they had once mastered at his lectures. Numerous splendid active fighters in the working class movement will always remember Comrade Sirola with thanks for the Communist education received from him.

The vital flame of this true, tireless comrade, loyal fighter for the cause of the liberation of the toilers and exploited, has suddenly burned out.

Eternal and bright memory to him!

DIMITROFF, KUUSINEN, MANUILSKY, MARTY, ERCOLI, PIECK,  
FLORIN, MOSKVIN, WANG MING, LENSKEY, KOLAROV, VRETILING,  
KOPLENIG, BELA KUN, KRUMIN, ANVELT, ANGARETIS, TSKHAYA,  
ISKROV, STASOVA, KIRSANOVA, TUOMINEN, STEIN, LEKHTOSAARI,  
GIULING, OYANEN

# A Book on the Italo-Ethiopian War

By K. HENRY

THE Italo-Ethiopian war has revealed with extreme acuteness the whole complicated network of inter-imperialist contradictions and class contradictions in the separate capitalist countries. Having exposed the brutal face of the war-mongers, it has drawn into the struggle against war those sections of the population who but recently were passive and kept aloof from politics. Ever wider circles of the masses are entering the struggle for peace under the slogans of the people's front.

The daily current reports about the course of the war operations are not enough for these masses of opponents of war: they want to get a more detailed acquaintance with the causes, the meaning, and the history which preceded the events now unfolding which threaten to become the starting point for a new world war. It is precisely for this reason that the appearance of *Ethiopia and Italy*,\* written by Emile Burns, one of the foremost authors in the English Communist Party, is extremely opportune.

Burns' book mobilizes broad circles of those opposed to war for the struggle against rapacious Italian imperialism, directs their activities along the right road, and expounds in a very clear manner all the essential problems which arise out of the Italo-Ethiopian war.

Burns first and foremost exposes the lying character of fascist propaganda: he reveals fascist Italy as the undoubted aggressor, striving to take possession of the Ethiopian market and to secure control of the internal wealth of Ethiopia.

This is how Burns sums up the history of the struggle for Ethiopia:

"All three [England, France, Italy—K.H.] had agreed among themselves at various times to a division of Abyssinia into 'spheres of influence'; each was trying at every opportunity to double-cross the others by separate approaches to the Abyssinian government" (p. 49).

After this the author analyzes the events which impelled Italy to make a direct attack upon Ethiopia and which enabled it to do so:

"Thrown back in Arabia, hemmed in in Libya, and not too successful in its diplomatic penetration of Southeastern Europe, the fascist government of Italy was therefore more and more compelled to look to Abyssinia as the only practicable outlet for its colonial ambitions" (p. 53).

The policy of the British National Government which openly encouraged the arming of Germany and thus threw France into the arms of Italy—in the latter, France hoped to find an ally in the event of being attacked by Germany—is regarded by Burns as the decisive fact which impelled Italy to take such energetic action.

\* Emile Burns: *Ethiopia and Italy*, 223 pp. International Publishers, New York. \$1.25.



Further, in his book, Burns analyzes the economic causes which urge the imperialists towards colonial expansion. Burns somewhat narrows the question by reducing these causes exclusively to the need for the export of capital, and ignoring, for example, the fact that the imperialist powers require cheap raw materials which he himself, in the beginning of the book, calls the chief cause of the attack by Italy upon Ethiopia.

Then the author establishes the fact that the League of Nations, in connection with the Italo-Ethiopian war, for the first time opposed an aggressor, in spite of the fact that the imperialist interests of one of the big powers was at stake. The author explains this by the fact that the character of the League of Nations itself has changed in connection with the exit from it of the most aggressive imperialist powers, and, first and foremost, in connection with the entrance of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations. It should be noted, however, that the importance of the U.S.S.R. as a fighter for peace, is insufficiently dealt with in the book, and consequently the chapter on the League of Nations is not quite convincing.

The chapter on "Abyssinia—and Italy" is very good. In it the author dissects to the very bone all the demagogic arguments with which the Italian fascists want to justify their campaign against Ethiopia. Burns emphasizes the fact that to support Ethiopia in her struggle against Italy by no means signifies support of the existing social conditions in Ethiopia:

"And the question of Italy's future is therefore more urgent and vital for the progress of humanity than the question of how rapidly and by what means feudalism can be abolished in Abyssinia" (p. 175).

Burns points out that the opportunity is open to Ethiopia and other countries like her to take the non-capitalist road of development along which many of the backward peoples of former tsarist Russia have progressed, thanks to the great proletarian revolution.

An examination is made in the book of the position of those elements in the British working class movement (the Independent Labor Party, and the Socialist League led by Stafford Cripps), which, allegedly in the interests of peace, were against the application of sanctions against Italy. Burns points out that their arguments are absolutely abstract, because they do not bear in mind the present character of the League of Nations, and do not take account of the fact that the struggle to maintain peace in the present case coincides with the struggle against Italian fascism. Analyzing the position of the Labor Party, Burns criticizes the one-sidedness with which the Labor Party relies upon sanctions, while rejecting any independent action by the working class. It is precisely this conduct of the Laborites which made it possible for the National Government to create a halo for itself as the true defender of peace, while in actual fact England was only in favor of sanctions on account of her own imperialist interests.

Burns compares the position of the Laborites with the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which regards the resistance of the Ethiopians to the attacks of the Italians not only as the struggle

against the arch enemy of the working class—fascism, which represents the terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary elements of monopolist capitalism. After this Burns describes the numerous protests in Europe and America against Italian imperialism, and condemns the reactionary leaders of the Second International for refusing to accept the proposal of the Comintern to undertake united action. The chief slogans of the Communist Party of England in the struggle against the rapacious Italian war are: to stop the transport of arms for Italy, to apply proletarian sanctions, and to demand that the League of Nations adopt a consistent policy of sanctions against the imperialist aggressor.

Speaking of the perspectives of the struggle for peace, the author once more dwells in detail on the importance of the League of Nations, pointing out that

“... although the League of Nations cannot eradicate the causes of war, it can at least be of very real service in the preservation of peace” (p. 219).

Hence he draws the correct conclusion: all supporters of peace are interested in as large a number as possible of the governments represented in the League of Nations being in favor of maintaining peace and of adopting collective action against war. But we can on no account agree with Comrade Burns when, in conclusion, he calls upon all opponents of fascism and war

“... to secure progressive governments, which in the present state of things means a Labor government in Britain, a ‘People’s Front’ government in France, and Social-Democratic governments in other capitalist countries” (p. 223).

It is clear that the Communists are not at all indifferent to the question as to what section of the bourgeoisie will be in power. But, on the other hand, Comrade Burns is wrong in throwing into one heap, and uniting under the heading “progressive”, a word which may mean anything, such heterogeneous conceptions as “a Labor Government in Britain, a ‘People’s Front’ government in France, and Social-Democratic governments in other capitalist countries” (*Ibid*).

Comrade Dimitroff in his report at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern pointed out the difference between a Social-Democratic government and a government of the united front or the anti-fascist people’s front in the following words:

“While the Social-Democratic government is an instrument of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the interests of the preservation of capitalist order, a *united front government* is an instrument of collaboration between the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and other anti-fascist parties, in the interests of the entire toiling population, a government of struggle against fascism and reaction. Obviously there is a *radical difference* between these two things.”

It is true that at the present moment, a government of the people’s front in France and a Labor government in England could encourage the maintenance of peace. But where the French Communists consider it

possible, under definite conditions, to declare for the establishment of a government of the people's front, and particularly because such a government, pursuing a policy "in the interests of the whole of the toiling people", would be able *firmly and consistently* to defend peace, the attitude of the English Communists to the slogan of a Labor government is different. At a general election they supported the slogan of a Labor government as a slogan of struggle in a united front against the reactionary National government, but the Communists made their support of a Labor government, had it come to power, conditional upon a number of special demands, in particular the demand for the struggle for peace.

There are even less grounds for the manner in which Burns raises the question of whether it is desirable from the viewpoint of the struggle for peace to have the "Social-Democratic governments in other capitalist countries". If the English Labor leaders together with a section of the English bourgeoisie are at the present moment in favor of maintaining peace, the leaders of other Social-Democratic Parties may find themselves on the side of that other section of their own bourgeoisie, who support the war-mongers. Does not Comrade Burns remember, for example, that in the spring of 1935 it was precisely a representative of the Social-Democratic government of Denmark who refrained from voting for the resolution adopted by the League of Nations, which condemned the introduction of universal conscription in Hitler Germany?

And so, not in all countries, and not in all circumstances does the formation of a Social-Democratic government coincide with the interests of peace, and not in all countries, and not in all circumstances will the supporters of peace give their support to such a government.

An essential condition for the successful struggle for peace is that the slogans be precise, the line of tactics clear. This is why we have considered it necessary to dwell on this wrong ending to what, generally speaking, is a good and valuable book.



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